Saturday, August 15, 2009 ▲ Vol. 24 / No. 248

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FALLEN BRAVES
A priest leads prayers for the 22 soldiers killed in battle with Abu Sayyaf and Moro rebels in Basilan during funeral rites at the gymnasium of the Western Mindanao Command in Zamboanga City on Friday

Dead soldiers mutilated

TEARS FOR DEARLY DEPARTED A mother and her two children weep for the loved one who's coming home for the last time—in a coffin.

'We have beheaded your loved one'

By Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—MOST OF them bore hack wounds. One had his head nearly severed.

And as they lay dying or dead, one of the Abu Sayyaf bandits sent a text message to the wife of one of the fallen Marines: "Pinagalan na namin ang mahal mo (We have beheaded your loved one)."

Rosalyn Toray, 26, broke into tears when she showed the Inquirer the message. It was sent from her husband's own cellphone, which the Abu Sayyaf bandit had apparently taken from his body.

Private First Class Darylle Toray of Iloilo City was among the 21 soldiers—18 of them Marines—who were killed in a day-long gunbattle with the Abu Sayyaf at Tipo-Tipo on Basilan island on Wednesday. At least 21 of the bandits also died in the clashes.

Yesterday, the coolers of the slain soldiers,

DEAD SOLDIERS A17

"DADDY WAKE UP!" cries 3-year-old Gail Matthew Miranda, son of Sgt. Elmer Miranda. According to his mother Arlene, Earl kept trying to wake up his father thinking he was just asleep. Arlene says the big question now for most of the widows is survival. At least, she's a midwife, she says.

MILF rebels pulled deadly ambush

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE GOVERNMENT WOULD not have suffered heavy losses in its latest offensive against the Abu Sayyaf bandits if Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) guerrillas—who were supposed to be observing a cease-fire—had not ambushed the government troops, the military said yesterday.

Eighteen of the 21 soldiers who died in Wednesday's day-long gun battle were not operating against the MILF but were on their way to reinforce soldiers caught in heavy fighting with the Abu Sayyaf in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan, a military spokesperson said.

"The Marines were going to rescue their comrades who were already being attacked by the Abu Sayyaf camp but they were ambushed by members of the MILF," Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr. told the Inquirer over the phone yesterday.

Brawner said the MILF fighters still proceeded with their

MILF REBELS A17

SINCE 2003

GMA spent ₱2.7B for trips abroad—COA

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Nikko Dizon and TJ Burgonio

DO THE MATH.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has racked up P2.7 billion in expenses in her foreign trips since 2003, or more than double the P1.3-billion limit set by Congress from 2003 to 2008, according to the Commission on Audit (COA).

In a presentation on Aug. 12 by COA Assistant Commissioner Carmela Perez, with additional research by his staff, Bukidnon Rep. Teofisto Guingona III said the President's foreign travels cost P352 million in 2003 (from a budget of P72 million), P256 million in 2004 (from P74 million), P325 million in 2005 (from P209 million), P421 million in 2006 (from P261 million), P656 million in 2007 (from P261 million) and P722 million in 2008 (from P244 million).

Guingona said the President kept within the budget in her first two years in office.

GMA SPENT A6

Sunvar lawyers say gov't has no personality to sue realty company

By Norman Bordadora

LAWYERS OF SUNVAR REALTY Development Corp. said the government had no personality to sue the corporation and compel it to execute a property structuring more than 22,000 square meters on Pasong Tamo (Chino Roces) in Makati City.

They sought the dismissal of the ejection case, which was filed in July at the Makati Metropolitan Trial Court (MMTC) with a prayer for the collection of more than P650 million in compensatory damages.

The government owns 68 percent of the property, said National Power Corp. (Napocor), the remaining 20 percent.

Cesar Manalaysay, Sunvar legal counsel, also told the Inquirer that the court had no jurisdiction over the case. He added that even if the case had been filed before the proper court, Sunvar had a valid case on the merits.

Said Sunvar president Carlos Rufino: "While we understand

SUNVAR A10

'I wear no pants so my grandma can see me on TV'

SUPER / E1

Release me now, Louie Gonzalez asks RTC

METRO / A19

UN Council opts not to condemn Suu Kyi verdict

WORLD / A22

Erap chides Palace over attack on media

By Fe Zamora

MALACAÑANG'S GOING AFTER media entities critical of President Macapagal-Arroyo shows that the President and her allies are in a state of "panic," said deposed President and convicted plunderer Joseph Estrada.

"They are losing their cool," said Estrada, who experienced intense media criticism during his abbreviated term from 1998 to January 2001, in a telephone interview.

But he claimed his situation was different.

"All those accusations about me were disinformation," he said.

"What we are hearing now is true, these are not disinformation," he said.

Estrada is the only Philippine President to have been impeached and ousted for corruption and incompetence in a people power uprising that installed Mrs Arroyo, his vice president, in Malacañang.

He was convicted for plunder in 2007 but was immediately pardoned by Mrs Arroyo. He never served a day of his 40-year jail sentence.

ERAP A9

Magna Carta of Women finally a law

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER SEVEN YEARS LANguishing in the legislative mill, a landmark legislation on women's rights has finally been enacted.

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed Republic Act 9710, or the Magna Carta of Women, yesterday morning in a ceremony attended by lawmakers and women leaders at the Rizal Hall in Malacañang.

RA 9710 recognizes and protects women's rights at home, at work and in all spheres of society toward developing all as-

MAGNA A19

Loren grills Noli, leaves Miriam amused

THE EXCHANGE WAS SO heated it made everyone wonder whether bitter rivals Sen. Loren Legarda and Vice President Noli de Castro had indeed reconciled as claimed earlier.

De Castro and Legarda crossed paths in the Senate yesterday at a hearing called by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, chair of the committee on economic affairs, to inquire into Cabinet officials' appearance in so-called infomercials that Santiago said amounted to primetime campaigning.

De Castro, who chairs the Housing Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), revealed that since 2007, the Pag-IBIG Fund has spent P172 million for radio and television spots to promote its

LOREN A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Central Luzon still experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms while the rest of the country will have partly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Cotabato City	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Iloilo	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Mostly Cloudy	San Fernando	Partly Cloudy
Legaspi	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga del Sur	Partly Cloudy
Virac	Partly Cloudy	Dipolog	Partly Cloudy

Second FRONTPAGE

Website: www.inquirer.net/online | E-mail: [illegible]

EZ2 (2PM DRAW) 9 22 31 31

SUERTRES (2PM DRAW) 7 5 1 (2PM DRAW) 0 8 1 (9PM DRAW)

FOUR DIGIT (2PM DRAW) 9 1 8 8 (9PM DRAW) 3 5 9

MEGALOTTO 6/45 2 18 23 30 33 41 P18,352,452.60

Now, Palace wants a new jet for GMA

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER CHARTERING COMMERCIAL airliners for the past eight years, it's about time President Macapagal-Arroyo personal members executive jet for her and successors' travels, Malacañang said yesterday.

Gary Olivar, presidential economic spokesperson, defended the Office of the President's (OP) decision to procure a presidential executive jet worth a whopping P1.2 billion.

"It's merely a purchase that would benefit not just the President but her successors," he told reporters in a Malacañang briefing.

The OP Bids and Awards Committee put out an Thursday in a [illegible] (not the Inquirer) inviting aircraft manufacturers, distributors and integrators to bid for the acquisition of one presidential [illegible] using executive jet.

The specifications are: it must be "factory new"; twin-engine, pressurized, equipped with instruments compliant with International Civil Aviation Organization and Federal Aviation Administration standards, and fitted with auxiliary power unit and in VIP cabin configuration.

It should have been used in VIP executive aircraft by the country of origin and by at least two countries, the GMAC said in the ad.

The approved budget for the contract is P1.2 billion, it added.

Olivar said that the Presidential Airlift Wing (PAW) has two fixed-wing aircraft—P-28 and P-27—but these are "old" and difficult to maintain.

"The Presidential Airlift Wing believes that it needs at least two fixed-wing jets for presidential visits, one primary and one back-up. Right now there is only one available, the P-28. And she chooses airlines outside for her airlift requirements. This can be very costly and poses high security risk," he said.

Unlike the P-28 and P-27, the executive jet is equipped with modern technology to ensure safety in all aspects of the flight, according to the OP.

'RP gets poorer, GMA gets richer'

By Michael Lim Ubac and Abigail L. Ho

THE PRESIDENT'S NET WORTH MAY HAVE RISEN "substantially" since she became the country's top executive, but the country racked up more foreign debt than usual in the same period.

Citing data from the Bureau of Treasury as of April this year, Sen. Francisco Escudero said yesterday that the net worth of President Macapagal-Arroyo increased by 116 percent from P60.8 million to P143.54 million, yet the country's foreign debt ballooned this year to P4.8 trillion, from around P2.8 trillion in 2001.

Reports on the President's assets were outlined in a recent article by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) that said it had increased significantly since her assumption to the presidency.

Expensive dinners

"In other words, the country grows poorer as she gets richer," added Escudero in a statement that seemed to add fuel to public uproar over reports of expensive dinners during Ms Arroyo's recent trip to Central Luzon.

Escudero noted that P600 billion, or nearly half of this year's budget of P1.4 trillion, went to debt payments.

"And yet nothing has been done to address the P300 billion lost annually by the Bureau of Customs and Internal Revenue to inefficient collection/collection," he said.

"This amount would have sufficed to double the budget for education," the senator added. "The next President should insist on interest debt payments and review our debt policy, so it can focus more on domestic spending," said Escudero, a presidential aspirant.

Respond to issues

Meanwhile, the Makati Business Club is challenging the President "to personally respond" to the issues raised by the PCIJ article.

The group said in a statement yesterday that the growth of Ms Arroyo's assets and net worth was "difficult to believe," considering the state of the economy and the [illegible] while she acquired her additional wealth.

"The business community would be particularly interested in the [illegible] growth of Mrs. Arroyo's net worth during her incumbency as a government employee from 1992-2008, when her personal wealth increased from P6.75 million to P143.54 million, according to the PCIJ account. That equates to a compounded growth of 20.1 percent per annum, wherein her net worth doubled every 3.4 years," the MBC said.

"Her stock portfolio, meanwhile, grew by 41 percent per annum from P95 million in 2006 to P1.16 million in 2008, at a time when the Philippine Stock Exchange index fell by 21 percent," the group added.

Like Caesar's wife

"Like Caesar's wife, the President must be above suspicion," it added. "As the highest public servant in our country and in the interest of good governance, she must set an example by making a full and transparent accounting of her and her family's wealth. She owes the Filipino people an explanation."

The MBC also chastised Ms Arroyo's legal advisers for "attacking the messenger as well as the messenger rather than responding to any meaningful and germane manner."

"The press serves a watchdog function and, disagreeable as it may be to those who have suffered its nasty bite, we must allow the press to perform this function, without coercion or threats," it said.

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*Based on a global consumer tracker that measured the brand health of 19 price Shell customers were questioned among 600 private motorists from October 9 to December 14, 2008. They were asked which fuel company they associated "better mileage" with.

GMA, Thai PM tackle Suu Kyi

By TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO AND visiting Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva yesterday agreed on the need for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to have a "solid position" on the case of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma (Myanmar).

Ms Arroyo welcomed the Prime Minister at the Presidential Security Group (PSG) compound in Malacañang at around 2 p.m. in military honors punctuated by a 19-gun salute. Both later sat down for bilateral talks.

Malacañang last night hosted a state dinner for the Prime Minister and his party, who are scheduled for a one-day official visit.

The two leaders tackled a wide range of issues, including Asean's position on the recent conviction of Suu Kyi by the Burmese government, North Korea's nuclear program, as well as cooperation between the two countries, including Thailand's commitment to jobs-for-the-Philippines on the purchase of Thai rice.

"She expressed the Thai Prime Minister, being chair of Asean, that member-countries should join together and have a solid position on the issue of Burma and Aung San Suu Kyi," Press Secretary Cerge Remonde told reporters.

Vejjajiva agreed but stressed that the regional grouping should exhaust ways to "constructively engage Myanmar," and at the same time "urge Myanmar to really democratize," he said.

"Vejjajiva agreed that it is quite difficult for the Asean to balance...continuing engagement with Myanmar, but at the same time, influencing Myanmar to really democratize," Remonde said.

A court has found Suu Kyi guilty of violating her house arrest by allowing an uninvited American to stay at her home. The head of the junta ordered her to serve 18 months under house arrest.

During the talks, the Prime Minister disclosed that the Thai Cabinet just approved a memorandum of agreement giving the Philippines preference on the purchase of Thai rice.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO welcomes Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva in Malacañang for their bilateral talks. EDDIE MATANGUIHAN

No fine dining, just a simple snack this time

By Nestor P Burgos Jr
Inquirer Visayas

ALMODOVAR, ILOILO—SWEET AND SIMple rice cake served.

Bill smacking Ilonis criticisms that she attended lavish dinners during her recent trip to the US, President Macapagal-Arroyo on Thursday shared a simple snack with officials and other guests of this town during an official visit.

The President sampled the town's famous native delicacy *sinukal*, with a hot native chocolate drink after she led the groundbreaking ceremonies for a bridge project in this town, 26 km northwest of Iloilo City.

Sinukal is made from steamed sticky rice, mixed with sugar and coconut, shaped into little balls and wrapped in banana leaves.

"You were served boiled food," President-ial Adviser for Western Visayas Raul Daniles told reporters in jest when asked what the President had for snacks. "She (Ms Arroyo) ate raw because during your (Ilonis') time, the food is," Almodovar Mayor Austrin Alipoo added.

The snacks—mostly native delicacies, cheese rolls and fresh spring rolls—were served in the Presidencia and her party as well as other visitors and the media, in the house of businesswoman Gilda Amparo-Arrellano.

Earlier, the President led the groundbreaking ceremonies for the 350-m Nichols Bridge. The old bridge was among the infrastructure damaged at the height of typhoon "Frank" last year.

Connecting the towns in 10 barangays of Almodovar, the bridge cost P366.45 million and was funded by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency. Although it is expected to be completed in 18 months, the President ordered the Department of Public Works and Highways to "work 24/7" to ensure the earlier completion of the project.

Ms Arroyo also inspected the Iloilo flood control project at the Aganan Bridge in Pavia town, 8 km north of Iloilo City during her visit. The P8.587 billion project covers Pavia town and Iloilo City and is intended to minimize the problem of perennial flooding there and the neighboring towns especially during typhoons.

The President was briefed by the DPWH on the progress of the Stage 1 of the project involving the 4.79-km Jaro Floodway, major components of the Tigum and Aganan rivers to Pavia and other drainage projects.

The Aganan Bridge is part of the Jaro floodway component that would divert 40 percent of the waters from Aganan and Tigum rivers, the main tributaries going to the city, towards the outer Iloilo coastal channel.

Ping to have day in court

By Norman Bordadora

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WILL RIquire Sen. Panfilo Lacson to appear before a panel looking into the reopened Dacer-Corbito double-murder case after private prosecutors have submitted all their pieces of evidence and submit his reply.

Lacson again copied yesterday to one group from the prosecutors' investigation into the complaint linking him as a mastermind to the killings of publicist Salvador Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito, in 2000.

The panel, chaired by Senior State Prosecutor Peter Ong, set the next hearing on Sept. 2. Lawyers of private complainants—Dacer's daughters...are expected to present four more witnesses and affidavits on that date.

The panel is expected to ask Lacson to appear before it and submit a counter-affidavit once the testimonies are admitted as evidence.

"Senator Lacson really doesn't need to attend yet. The evidence of the complainants are not complete," Lacson's lawyers Gregorio Fernandez, told reporters.

"They should first complete the evidence. That is when Senator Lacson has to affirm his affidavit," he added.

Lawyer Demetrio Custodio, counsel for the Dacers, said the four witnesses they would present witnessed the second killing of the publicist.

He said their testimonies has already been included in the regional trial court case against police officers who are already facing trial for the double murders.

"They are only intended to complete the picture," Custodio said.

Lacson has been implicated by the Dacer-Corbito case after an accused, former Supt. Cezar Mancao, executed an affidavit saying that the senator, at the time the chief of the Philippine National Police, ordered the assassinations operations against Dacer and the ranking police officer at that time.

More immigration officers at Naia

By Marlon Ramos

TO BOLSTER ITS MONITORING OF THE country's premier airport, the Bureau of Immigration has deployed 20 additional immigration officers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Pasay City.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan said the immigration officers were among the 92 newly hired employees who recently finished a one-week rigid training in Clark Field, Pampanga.

He said the increase in the influx of passengers at the airport and the opening of Naia Terminal 3 prompted the deployment of more immigration officers.

According to Libanan, the rookie immigration agents attended lectures and on-the-job training to sharpen on immigration rules and procedures.

"As part of its capability building program, the 92 requires all newly hired personnel to undergo a training program prior to being deployed or assigned to their posts at the Naia and other BI subposts or field offices," he said in a press statement.

Together with acting Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera, Libanan welcomed the new employees during a simple program at the immigration bureau's office in Intramuros.

Aside from understanding legal and technical issues related to immigration, immigration training director Simeon Salinda said the immigration officers also underwent a session on "courtesy and discipline."

"The second batch of the employees will complete their training this week and they, too, will later be deployed at the Naia," Salinda said.

The creation of the plantilla positions for the new immigration officers was approved by Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya, Libanan said.

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Correction

IN THE AUG. 14 ISSUE, the Metro section published the wrong photo of the month's new bacolOD in Bottleneck...Read on Page A27. The photo used was an updated photo of the Iloilo Metro bacolOD.

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The Daily Gospel

Saturday, August 15, 2009
Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary
1st Reading: Rev 11:19a, 12:1-6a, 10ab
2nd Reading: 1 Cor 15:20-27
Gospel: Lk 1:39-56

Mary then set out for a town in the hills of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with holy spirit, and giving a loud cry, said, "You are most blessed among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! How do I deserve the honor of the Lord's mother to visit me? The moment your greeting sounded in my ears, the baby within me responded with leaps for joy. Blessed are you who believed that the Lord's word would come true!"

And Mary said:
"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit exults in God my savior!
He has looked upon his servant in her lowliness;
now all people forever will call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done great things for me.
Holy is his name!
From age to age his mercy extends
to those who live in reverence.
He has acted with power and done wondrous deeds,
and scattered the proud with their plans.
He has put down the mighty from their thrones
and lifted up those who are downtrodden.
He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
He has helped Israel his servant, his servant,
for he remembered his mercy,
even as he promised our fathers,
Abraham and his descendants forever."
Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned home.

Commentary:

By proclaiming the bull, Munificentissimus Deus, on 1 November, 1950, Pope Pius XII infallibly declared that the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was a dogma of the Catholic faith. Likewise, the Second Vatican Council, in its dogmatic constitution, Lumen Gentium, taught that the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, when her earthly life was over, and exalted by the Lord as queen over all things.

It is very interesting that the Holy Spirit has led the Church to believe in Mary's share in the glorification. As closer was she in divine on earth, she is with him, body and soul, in heaven, in the light of the Assumption of Mary. It is easy to pray at her with new meaning. She herself pray to God her savior. She was the lowly handmaid, who deeply acknowledged God and was raised to the heights. It was her position of strength...she helps the lowly and the poor find justice on earth, and challenges the rich and powerful to distribute wealth and power as a source of happiness.

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BERSAMIN MURDER SUSPECT

QC court orders arrest of Abra former governor

By Julie M. Aurelio

A QUEZON CITY COURT HAS DENIED the motion of former Abra governor Vicente Valera to dismiss the murder charges against him in connection with the 2006 murder of Atty. Luis Bersamin.

In an Aug. 10 order, Judge Lanaire Cortez also issued an arrest warrant against Valera and his co-accused, Jerry Tacquiza and Sgt. Leo Brillo. His bail was recommended.

Cortez said there was no proof that the city prosecutors who recommended the filing of charges had committed abuse of discretion, as alleged in Valera's motion for judicial determination of probable cause, to warrant the court's intervention.

The court said the accused had been given all the opportunity to present counter-controverting evidence during the preliminary investigation.

Motion denied

The court also denied Brillo's motion for the suspension of proceedings, saying more than two years have elapsed since the Bersamin murder.

"The state also has the right to due process and for speedy trial in the prosecution of the suspects," the court said.

On March 17, assistant city prosecutor Gilmore Rondo Jr. recommended the filing of four counts of murder and two counts of frustrated murder against Valera, Tacquiza and Brillo.

Valera was implicated as the mastermind by two other suspects—Freddie Dupo and Sunny Tandoc—who alleged that Valera wanted to kill his political rivals at the 2007 polls.

Bersamin and his bodyguard were shot dead outside the Mt. Carmel Church on Dec. 16, 2006. Bersamin's driver, Allan Tandoc, and a 13-year-old boy, Nelly Boy Labajo, survived the attack.

Dupo and Tandoc, who claimed to have served as a guide to the gunmen, signed confessions as separate accusers in 2007 and 2008, in which they alleged that Valera had masterminded the murder.

Confession over denial

Dupo, his cousin Tandoc and another suspect, Rufino Oteyza, have been arrested and are being tried for murder and frustrated murder.

In his resolution, Cortez said there was enough evidence on record, particularly Tandoc and Dupo's confessions, to indict Valera and the two others for the murder, which he said should be given more weight than mere denials.

"The evidence on the existence of a conspiracy among respondents and Dupo and Tandoc is very strong," he said.

In his concurring affidavit, Valera denied being involved in the murder. He said he "never had any serious personal and political differences with Bersamin, as he avoided have no motive to eliminate him."

Valera, who was Abra governor in the 1980s and 1990s, also denied having met with Dupo or anybody else to plot the murder. Brillo similarly denied the charges against him.

Dupo, a former vice mayor of La Paz, Abra, alleged that he and another person he called "Uncle" had met with Valera at a La Trinidad beach resort to talk about the plot to kill Bersamin.

FELLOW GOVERNMENT employees light candles and seek justice for Fiorante Cadilao. (CONTRIBUTED)

Gov't workers urge Palace to act on welfare exec's slay

By Nikko Dizon

TOO CAUGHT UP IN DEFENDING itself over President Macapagal-Arroyo's birth decrees, Malacañang seemed to have forgotten to order an investigation into the brutal murder of a social welfare attaché in Malaysia last week, a militant organization of government workers said.

The Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage) said in a statement yesterday that Malacañang has "not issued a single statement" on the murder of Social Welfare attaché Fiorante Cadilao.

Courage president Ferdinand Gaite said this was "deplorable" especially since the "racist propaganda machinery of the government was being used to justify and excuse the unconscious disaster the President and the government officials had to the United States."

"The least the government should do is to order an immediate probe into his killing, assist his bereaved family and seek justice," Cabilao said.

Cadilao was found bludgeoned to death inside his apartment in Bukit Lampur last last week. His body arrived yesterday from Kuala Lumpur.

Courage expressed the belief that Cadilao was killed because of his strong campaign against sex and human trafficking in Malaysia that had victimized many Filipinos.

Cadilao was a former director of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) before he was deployed to Malaysia as a social welfare attaché at the Philippine Embassy.

In an interview last March, Cadilao had told the Inquirer that in the second semester of 2008 alone, 50 Filipino women were rescued from brothels and sex dens by the Philippine Embassy and repatriated to the Philippines.

He had said that since January this year, 32 had been sent back home.

Cadilao had added that he wanted the government in "hold" the repatriated Filipino women at the DSWD for "counseling and debriefing."

The "policy to hold" these women was for Cadilao, a way to end the vicious cycle of Filipino women being sent home only to leave anew and work illegally in foreign countries.

Absentee voters listing picks up

THE NUMBER OF FILIPINOS REGISTERING for absentee voting for the 2010 elections is increasing as the deadline nears, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said.

In its report as of July 30, the DFA said new overseas absentee voting (OAV) registrants worldwide has reached a total of 157,398, and has surpassed that of the 2004-2006 absentee voting registration which resulted 142,887.

Hong Kong, which has a high number of household service workers, has the biggest number of voters with 18,232 registrants. It was followed by Los Angeles in the United States 8,866; Dubai at 8,343; and Singapore 6,826.

The deadline for OAV registrations is on Aug. 31.

Kristine L. Alave

NEDA Director General & Socio Economic Planning Secretary Ralph G. Recto

Pasig River not dead yet, DENR study says

By Alcuin Papa

ONCE CONSIDERED "BIOLOGICALLY dead," the Pasig River is very much alive, according to a recent Biodiversity study conducted by an agency of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

A 110-page report entitled "Biodiversity Assessment of Pasig River and its Tributaries: Ecosystems Approach (Phase One)" showed that the river, known to have a high coliform bacteria content coming from riverside communities, is able to support marine life as well as several species of birds, trees and aquatic plants.

The study was conducted by the Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB) from September 2008 to February 2009, and was funded by the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, also an agency under the DENR.

According to the report, around 118 species under 94 genera and 41 families of trees and other vegetation live in the river and its banks. Mango, banaba and tipi-tipi trees were found thriving in the embankment upstream and downstream of the river. Of the species present, approximately 60 percent are exotic and 20 percent indigenous.

RIVER RIVER. Still supporting marine life

Feeding grounds

The vegetation along the entire stretch of the river serves as shelter and feeding grounds to diverse species of birds, mammals and mammals, the ERDB said. A total of 39 species of birds belonging to 33 genus and 23 families residing in the area have been recorded by ERDB. Of the total number of species, 38 percent are migratory, while only 15 percent are endemic.

"The whole stretch of Pasig River, particularly vegetated areas such as linear parks and forest gardens, is an important urban bird area, basically for roosting and feeding. The species recorded therefore, could be considered as urban-adaptable species," the study added.

Water hyacinth (Eichornia crassipes), lemon-grass (Cymbopholus densiflorus), kangkong (Ipomoea aquatica) and guinjo (Ipomoea stolonifera) were among the aquatic plants found. Of these, only the water hyacinth belongs to the exotic variety, while the rest are indigenous to the Philippines.

The study said eight fish species were found living in the river, between of the fishes, the lanchid (Mandia pangasilid), mandalig (Diplosid canyi), bum bum (Indo-Pacific tarpon), aling (Ombrichthys caeruleus), gurami (Osphronemus goramy), tilling (Mozapus vaillei) and oligio (Oligo oligio), are important food species that there is also the dreaded jacket fish or vanilla catfish (Pangasianodon hypophthalmus) who eat up most everything in its path.

"The study aims to generate baseline data on the status of the flora and fauna diversity of the Pasig River and to assess the effect of the improvement of the river's water quality on biodiversity," said DENR Secretary Lito Atienza said.

The ERDB team, headed by Dr. Carmelita Villanueva, employed multidisciplinary approaches for the study, including biophysical and socio-economic surveys, statistical analysis and data gathering. The study was conducted in coordination with the Laguna Lake Development Authority and the Environmental Management Bureau.

The first phase of the study focused on the upstream portion of the Pasig River, at its inlet in Laguna de Bay, and the downstream portion, its outlet to Manila Bay. The second phase, which starts only next month, will focus on the four major and 43 minor tributaries of the river.

Ramon L. Romero II; 85

LAWYER RAMON LIGOT Romero II died at 85 on Aug. 12 in Chicago, Illinois. He was the nephew of Pastor C. Ledesma.

His children and their spouses are Rosemarie, Lee Virginia and Antonio Ramil, Ramon III and Erlinda, Enrique and Trina, Teresita and the late Ferdinand.

His siblings are Sally R. Valdellon, Jose, Redentor and Victoria R. Ilarde.

Memorial services are to be held at Drake & Sons Funeral Home, 8303 Middlewinter Ave., Chicago, on Aug. 15 and at the Philippine International Baptist Church, 1543 Ashby st., Windsor, Ontario, Canada, on Aug. 16.

His ashes are to be buried beside the remains of his wife Pastor and son Ferdinand at Greenlawn Memorial Gardens in Windsor, Ontario.

GMA spent ₱2.7B for trips abroad–COA

From page A1

According to Malacañang's press release archives, the President went on 54 foreign trips from 2001 to 2008, a number of which involved multiple destinations encompassing continents that required the change of an AIRAWAYbill.

Occasionally the spends less than a day in one country. And the expenses grew according to the number of Cabinet officials, members of her security personnel.

In an interview on the "Tao po! Dzz" radio program, Gutierrez said there was an effort to reduce the public by keeping the President's official foreign travel budget "within the limits set by law without contingency fund to fill up for any shortfall in funding."

"There is a pattern here. She is hiding her travel expenses in her contingency funds. She she is spending more than what was allowed for emergency purposes but Ms Arroyo had been using it exclusively to bankroll her foreign trips.

Going overboard

Gutierrez said the President went overboard last year when she overspent even her own limit.

He said the President had a contingency fund of only P600 million in 2008 but ended up with P920 million in travel expenses. He pointed out that it was against the law to spend more than what Congress had approved in the budget.

In her recent State of the Nation Address, the President lashed at her critics for purportedly being biased in their assessments and failing to show proof of their claims of misbehavior.

But the fact, Gutierrez said, the P1.8 billion overspending in her travel expenses was not a claim by the political opposition but a report from an independent government agency.

COA website

COA records also showed that the President spent some P1.44 billion on her foreign travels from 2002 to 2007.

The Inquirer yesterday found the breakdown of the foreign travels in the COA annual audit reports posted on its website www.coa.gov.ph.

They were listed as "Traveling Expenses-Foreign" under the Office of the President's Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) and showed how Ms Arroyo's travel expenses swelled every year:

TRAVEL EXPENSES		
Year	Budget	Actual
01	P15 M	P20.0 M
02	P15 M	P20.0 M
03	P250 M	P250 M
04	P250 M	P429 M
05	P250 M	P429 M
06	P250 M	P429 M
07	P1.44 B	P1.77 B
08	P1 B [est.]	P1.79 B

From Institute Gutierrez. At pa datos lamat mumbawasan ng 500,000. Correct here.

- 2002: P80,625,300.00
- 2003: P109,879,200.00
- 2004: P115,988,537.40
- 2005: P154,381,300.00
- 2006: P398,447,500.00
- 2007: P569,485,555.28

The COA has yet to post its 2008 audit report on the Office of the President, its 2008 audit report remained unavailable.

A COA official, who asked not to be named for lack of authority to speak to the media, said that while the audit reports did not qualify who were in the trips, it could be concluded that all these were presidential travels overseas.

"It's axiomatic that if the report is audited in the Office of the President, it is the President [who travelled] ... because the principal of that office is the President in front of some offices than not there are other officials, like Cabinet members, who are part of the trip," the COA official said.

As for Gutierrez's claims, the official said it would be better for the public to see for itself the audit reports posted on the COA website.

The official said the reports posted on the website were "sufficient documents" and that the COA could conduct a special audit as long as the reports were "reasonable and in order."

Reports on the expensive shirts of the President and her party at Bobby Van's Steakhouse in Washington and Le Cirque in New York have prompted Ilocos Mona Rep. Teodoro Casiño to request COA Chair Reynaldo Villar to conduct a special audit as to determine whether public funds had been spent.

Casiño said the dinners run against the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

'Budget room'

But for all that, the President is not about to step out.

Gary Olivar, Ms Arroyo's spokesperson on economic matters, yesterday told reporters that she had yet overdrew her budget for foreign trips and had "budget room" to go abroad in the 18 remaining months of her term.

"Well, the DBM (Department of Budget and Management) authorities tell us that there's still budget room for her to continue to travel because she has not exceeded her budget," Olivar said when asked at a briefing if she is expected to cut down on trips.

He added: "It all depends on the benefits we're looking for whenever she travels."

Quoting the DBM, Olivar said that in 2008, the Office of the President spent some P525.8 million on local and foreign trips out of the P2618 million allocated in the 2008 national budget.

DBM figures on her trips from 2001 to 2005 were not available.

Olivar argued that if even the Office of the President exceeded its budget for foreign trips, that was allowed under Section 62 of the General Appropriations Act for 2009.

Section 62 states that agencies may augment any item of expenditure within the MOOE from savings in other MOOE items without DBM approval.

There's no budget flexibility. Period," he said. "If you don't have savings in other parts of the budget to find more trips, then that is allowed," Olivar said.

Besides, no one can put a price tag on the pledges of investments, potential employment for workers and range of economic activities Filipinos worldwide that are gained from such trips, he said.

"If one is interested to death, how do we put a price on his life?" Olivar said. "Are we going to stop because there are budget constraints, when there is an opportunity to submit a woman's life?"

Roadside

Olivar delivered an opening statement in which he took a jab at a broadcaster who had been hitting hard at the Office of the President.

He lamented that this Arroyo continued to show flak over her own broadcast show but pro-poor programs, and wondered who was prodding the broadcaster to halt at the President.

This was how Olivar worded his broadside:

"And yet we continue to hear the constant deplorable of salivation against the President and her office. Consider these rhetorical questions from a TV broadcaster who had his own problems with media publicity not too long ago and, therefore, should have heightened sensitivity.

"Bakang iyo ang ilan Cebu Ano ba ito ang pinagpapasan nyo sa Office of the President at unfortunately maraming ang napatawag nagsabing Pilipino sa tanggapin ang Bangsal? Ano ba ito ang mga pera iyon?

"Sabi ni Andrew Jackson, dapat ay si Michael Jackson, dapat at the ease in the universe. And when you do so, ask that man: Ano ba ang nanakaw sa kapwa ninyo ang pinagsabi at ang pinagsasabihan ninyo? Kanino ang agenda ito ang ginagawa nyo? At nasa maintindihan ba ang agenda na iyon hanyar sa pamamagitan ng yung programa na dapat maging pahinuod, nagpapait at balasubalo sa mga kababayan nang salita at hanging publiko?"

Suarez: I hosted $15,000 steak dinner to celebrate Arroyos' wedding anniversary

By Miko Morales

LAS VEGAS, Nevada, Aug. 14 (Inquirer.net)—Former Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson said Ms Arroyo deserved to be treated to an expensive dinner because of her status.

Ilocos Oriental Gov. Cesa Bulaong accused the dinner at Le Cirque as not befitting a President because food and other items were really expensive in New York.

The governors spoke with the Inquirer at the sidelines of the inaugural poker and color meeting at the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas.

But for Camporedo Valley Gov. Arthur Uy, what mattered most was that the amount paid for the dinner could have helped many Filipinos.

He said officials should lead by example and tighten their belts. With reports from TJ Burgonio and Divinagracia H. Arevalo in Manila, Orlando B. Dinoy, Inquirer Visayas

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Loren grills Noli, leaves Miriam amused

From page A1

housing programs.

The vice president, who is reportedly one of those aspiring to run for president in 2010, appointed his best friend to the post.

De Castro chairs both the HUDCC and the Home Development Mutual Fund, popularly known as the Pag-IBIG Fund, an attached agency of the HUDCC.

Lagarde, another presidential aspirant, began to grill De Castro with questions on the the Pag-IBIG infrastructure.

De Castro said the senator began appearing in the infrastructure in 2005 at the request of the Pag-IBIG management to help encourage more people into acquiring housing units.

He said Pag-IBIG's new housing loan programs, whose implementation was begun in 2006, had generated only P16 billion in loan applications.

Lagarde then asked De Castro what was the changed Pag-IBIG low-cost housing loan and was told it was P400,000 at six percent interest payable in 30 years.

"Don't you see that the P172 million should have just been spent for the P400,000 low-cost housing, that so-long since we've in the radio and you see in television?" Lagarde told De Castro in Filipino.

More apply for house loans

De Castro replied that Lagarde may be right about that but stressed that his infrastructure had brought in more people to apply for Pag-IBIG loans.

He said that in 2007, Pag-IBIG approved P23 billion worth of loans from Pag-IBIG members, and P39 billion in 2008. He said that so far this year, loan approvals have reached P45 billion.

He said Pag-IBIG expects loan applications and approvals to increase at the rate of 42 percent every year.

Lagarde asked De Castro whether he believed that his "voice and face" resulted in the spiking of these loan figures.

"That could be part of it but what is most important is what I said in those infomercials," the vice president said, adding that "I'm not promoting myself but I'm promoting the program of Pag-IBIG."

'More credible endorser'

"I think you will agree, Sen. Legarda, that I am a more credible endorser of the new housing programs," De Castro said.

Legarda then said she suspect Santiago's position to impose a ban on "voices and faces" appearing in infomercials.

She said "nobody has a monopoly of talent and town its quite because it's many here."

Doughnut, eat the hole

On the sidelines of the ceremonial signing of the Magna Carta of Women in Malacañang, Spindle Princess Negrales rolled on critics in the drug-busting the President over their expensive dinners.

"I think we should stop making the President a punching bag, and let us concentrate more on the doughnut, not the hole. And let's look at the better things in life," Negrales told reporters.

"Every time we hit them government, and but it excessively, we are destroying our own honor ... We are destroying our nation before the international community. I don't think that's what we want," he said.

Negrales dismissed talk that Ms Arroyo was enjoying the good life in her foreign trips, as proved by the dinners at Le Cirque and Bobby Van's Steakhouse.

"She's working (President Arroyo) until late and you're talking about? You should see how she works from the plane, from the tarmac to the touchdown, and the meetings that she has to attend. I myself can't keep up with her," he said.

Don't blame media

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago said the Philippine media should not be blamed for reporting on the expensive dinners.

Her said Malacañang should explain the dinners so that it could "get out of trouble," and agreed that Palace officials had not been forthcoming.

"I think the spokesman should just say that: He got the details. It will take a little time, but I'll reveal it to the media," Santiago, a staunch ally of the President, told reporters.

"I don't think anger is going to take the place of a plausible, rational explanation because I'm Filipinos are world famous for our hospitality, we won't be surprised just as long as charges are explained to us," he said.

Santiago said the Palace should say, for example, how many people the President entertained in the dinner at Le Cirque or $20,000 dinner at Le Cirque so that it could be seen "how much per person was paid."

Just tell truth

In this way, we can now determine if the money per person was steep, and if the dinner was "manifestly excessive," she said.

"Sec Malacañang to get out of trouble, it's very easy. Just tell the truth," Santiago said.

But senator also said the people entertained by the President should not get her in trouble "by inviting her to the top level, high-on-priced fine dining places."

"She can be invited to re-

HOT SEAT At the Senate hearing on provocative campaign spending are Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, Finance Secretary Margarita Nieves and Vice President Noli de Castro. BOY SANTOS

THE GRILL Senators Miriam Defensor Santiago and Loren Legarda grill members of the Cabinet during a Senate hearing looking into the provincial campaign spending by government officials allegedly using public funds. Other senators were no-shows. BOY SANTOS

The exchange ended and De Castro feasted Legarda on the check before leaving the hearing.

He later told reporters that he did not mind the manner in which Legarda had questioned him. He was just doing her job, he said.

'Biggest expenditures'

Legarda told reporters she had zeroed in on De Castro because his office had the highest and most "glaring" expenditures among the government agencies.

She said she had investigated her radio show, the P171 million spent on the infomercials could have produced 400,000 more housing units.

It was Legarda who told reporters earlier this week that she had reconciled with De Castro, her opponent in the 2007 vice presidential race whom she accused of cheating.

Santiago was amused by the whole thing, saying that at least it brought Legarda to her comfort zone.

Other senators who are featured in their own infomercials have shunned the inquiry which Santiago said was a "hot potato".

"Sen. Legarda reminded the hearing she had a fight with the Vice President," she said, laughing. Christine D. Avendaño

Press freedom one of Cory's biggest legacies, says Columbia U professor

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—IF THE PHILIPPINE press has become one of the freest in Asia, credit the late President Corazon Aquino for helping embed it from the repression of martial rule, said Sheila Coronel, a Ramon Magsaysay awardee for Journalism, Literature and Creative Communication Arts.

"As a journalist, one of the biggest achievements or legacies of President Cory is media freedom," Coronel, who was visiting this city, told the Inquirer yesterday.

Coronel, executive director of the Toni Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism of Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, where she is also a faculty member, came home to witness the Aug. 5 burial of Aquino and pay homage to the heroine of the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution.

When she saw thousands of mourners lining the streets to bid farewell the former President, she couldn't help but recall the 1983 funeral of Aquino's husband Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. which she had covered as a young reporter.

"There are so many parallels. The crowds are almost the same. It's like coming full circle," she said. "Filipinos respect and love those who fought for their freedom. I truly appreciate that in our country. Although so many problems loom us, we still value our freedom and democracy and love those who defended them," she said in Filipino.

Happy tears

Also just as she says during the long, crowded funeral procession for Ninoy Aquino, she found herself crying as the courage brought Cory Aquino to her final resting place, she said.

But they were "happy tears" Coronel said, as she realized that Filipinos love the country and still cherish freedom.

Freedom is sweeter for the working press that had little or none of it in the time of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos, she added.

"The assassination of Ninoy unleashed pent-up emotions and (enabled) journalists to regain the voice and people to express their dissatisfaction with the Marcos government," Coronel said.

Wrath of the people

And those who did not see the truck earned the wrath of the people.

"I covered the press release that brought the body of Ninoy to Tarlac. I was in a van identified with the Manila Bulletin (then a crony paper). The people threw stones at the van and shouted: 'You should write the truth. You should write what you saw.' My colleagues and I were crying inside the van because we needs as we wanted to report the truth, there was censorship," she said.

"In those years when typewriters were still in use, our circles were cut up, the red pen always at work," Coronel recalled.

In contrast, she said Aquino believed in, and upheld press freedom.

"When she was President she respected the press. In the time of harsh criticism—even early on, her Cabinet was divided—she was losing her and but did nothing to violate the freedom of the press," Coronel said.

"(Aquino) respected those who were angry at her," she said.

At once, what Aquino did was use for it, but the late columnist Luis Beltran, for alleging that she told media her bed during one of the many coup attempts that besieged her administration.

"She had abiding faith in freedom, democracy and the role of a free press," Coronel said.

WHAT WENT BEFORE

IN 1999, THE THEN PRESIDENT JOSEPH Estrada was widely believed to be behind an advertising boycott of the Inquirer because of the paper's allegedly negative reports about him.

Estrada vowed to get back at newspapers that criticized him.

"Your time will come (May seize the keys)," he said.

Without mentioning the Inquirer by name, he denounced a "Makati-based newspaper" whose owners he alleged to be "squatters" on "prime lots" owned by the government.

Estrada said he had ordered then Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora and the justice secretary to investigate the owners of the paper.

After the Ballon-Pérez family issued a statement denying his allegations, Estrada backtracked and said that he did not order an investigation of the Inquirer, but merely of a "disadvantageous" contract concerning government property in Makati.

"I didn't say the Inquirer. I'm not blaming the Inquirer. The persons leasing the property, who are rich, are paying the government a very small amount. The contract is very disadvantageous to the government. Thus is what I wanted investigated," he said in a mixture of English and Filipino.

In an ambush interview, he claimed he had been misquoted once again.

Also in 1999, citing "pressures," the Cojuangcos hastily sold the Manila Times to a banking developer.

In its last issue, the paper screamed in bold letters, "Binuggua Joint ng tops in Dr-ug" (We were run over by drug-ic pop).

Estrada arguably denied he, or his adviser Mark Antonio, had anything to do with the Manila Times' closure.

The closure was preceded by the filing of a P181-million libel suit against the paper by Estrada, who was angered by an article that said he was the "unwilling subway" of a P17-billion hydroelectric contract awarded to an Argentinian firm. —Inquirer Research

Source: Inquirer Archives

Erap chides Palace

From page A1

Estrada said "it was wrong" for lawyer Rodolfo Macalintal and other Palace spokespersons to say that an "immoral" act—he has no right to question the propriety of the President's dining in expensive restaurants while traveling abroad.

"The media has a constitutional duty to perform," Estrada said.

"But Mrs. Arroyo has no regard for the Constitution because she became President unconstitutionally," he said.

"She's been breaking all the rules," he said.

He said that Mr Arroyo had issued an order that could to control the people's right to peaceful assembly.

He claimed Mr Arroyo also ordered the highly critical "Manila Tribune" newspaper to be closed down.

Estrada also reminded Mr Arroyo the rule of media in any administration. "The media can make or unmake a President," he said.

The deposed leader, widely believed to have been behind the advertising boycott of the Inquirer in 1999 because of what he considered to be the paper's negative coverage of him, yesterday sought to explain away his actions 10 years ago.

Along with the boycott of the Inquirer, he ordered his then Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora and his justice secretary to investigate the paper's owners, the Ballon-Pérez family, whose company, Inserse, he accused of "squatting" on a government-owned "prime lot" in Makati. (See In the Know on this page.)

"That was long ago. I thought that was buried already. Why is it being resurrected now?" the deposed president said.

He claimed he was not aware that the property belonged to the owners of the Inquirer.

"Initially I did not know. That was between them and Ronnie Zamora," he said.

For more than a week now, the President has been under intense media criticism over reports from United States-based newspapers that she and her entourage had spent almost $20,000 for a dinner at the upscale Le Cirque restaurant in New York and almost $15,000 in a steak restaurant in Washington, DC.

Malacañang's explanations for these expenditures have been vague and even contradicting.

Mr Arroyo went to the US on a working visit two weeks ago where she met with US President Barack Obama.

From Washington, DC, she visited New York, and stayed at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

Presidential Spokesman Lorraine Badoy, said in Bacolod City last Thursday that the President should disclose how much she and her entourage spent on the accommodations and other expenses during her US trip.

Defina said the trip was an "absolutely innovative and tremendous display of wealth," regardless of who paid.

The United Opposition said that instead of blaming the media, the government should just reveal the total expenses racked up by the President and her entourage.

UNO president Arjoman Binay said some reports showed that the Philippine Consulate in New York has been slapped with the bill for Mr Arroyo and her group, who stayed for three days in the city.

The charges include payments for the Arroyos' suite at Waldorf-Astoria and for the other members of the delegation, limousine service, and two dinners at Le Cirque.

"Malacañang needs to come clean on the issue. Who paid for the travel expenses, the hotel accommodations, the two dinners at Le Cirque and the limousine services? If these were paid for by the consulate, then it is taxpayers' money," he said. With reports from Wilson DC Lopez and Carla D'Ocrero, Inquirer Visayas

PhilHealth Advisory

PhilHealth Compliance to Executive Order No. 821 s-2009

All claims with admission dates starting today August 15, 2009, shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order No. 821 s-2009 entitled "Prescribing the Maximum Drug Retail Prices for Selected Drugs and Medicines that Address Diseases that Account for the Leading Causes of Morbidity and Mortality." The implementing guidelines for this purpose shall be issued soon.

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NEGOSYO PARA SA BAWAT PILIPINO!

HUGGUT Cebu Rep. Rasti Del Mar falls off his chair while President Macapagal-Arroyo makes arrangement for the photo-op of the signing of the Magna Carta of Women held at the Heroes Hall in Malacañang Palace.

Magna Carta

From page A1

pects of their well-being. Its most salient features include increasing the number of women perceived until they fill half of third-level positions in the government, setting up in every barangay a "violence against women's desk," providing incentives to partnerships with women's agencies and banning the derogatory portrayal of women in media and film.

The new law's most "empowering provision" is its recognition that "women's rights are human rights," Commission on Human Rights (CHR) Chair Leila de Lima told reporters after the 10-min signing.

Section 8 of RA 9710 reads: "All rights in the Constitution and those rights recognized under international instruments duly signed and ratified by the Philippines, in consonance with Philippine law, shall be rights of women under this Act to be enjoyed without discrimination."

"And therefore," De Lima said, "the principles of human rights are there—non-discrimination, equality, participation, non-exclusion, etc."

According to the National Commission on Filipino Women, legislative advocacy—Magna Carta of Women and Magna Carta for Rural Women—began in the 12th Congress.

The two bills were refiled in the 13th Congress before it came to be called the Magna Carta of Women.

Said NCRFW chair Yeo in a statement: "The Magna Carta of Women is a milestone to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women by recognizing, protecting, fulfilling and promoting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Filipino women, particularly those in the marginalized sectors."

GMA's priority

The NCRFW and women's groups lobbied intensively for the approval of the measure in the Senate and the House of Representatives before Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo marked allegedly delayed it since 2007 when the bills were first filed.

Gabriela Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan praised women's groups for convincing the executive department to approve the measure.

Ilagan said Arroyo's signing of the measure into law "is a testament to the strength of the women's movement in the country."

"WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS" Photo shows Commission on Human Rights Chairperson Leila de Lima (left) and Philippine Commission on Women Chairperson Remedios Rikken (right) flanking President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo during the signing of the Magna Carta of Women held at the Heroes Hall in Malacañang Palace for the signing ceremony.

Sunvar lawyers sa personality to sue

From page A1

that the landowners were to sell the property there is a contract of lease that must be respected."

Mendoza said the new lease agreement would be for another 25 years from the time the lease expired in 2002. He said the contract was extended for another 25 years by virtue of the renewal clauses of the lease and sublease agreements.

The agreement between the Technology Resource Center Foundation Inc. (TRCF) and Sunvar provides: "The term of the sublease shall be for an initial period of 25 years and five months commencing on July 31, 1985, renewable for another 25 at Sunvar's exclusive option."

Sunvar is owned by the Balmoceda Pelaez families, who also own the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

'Good, valid defenses'

In a statement issued by the Ilgalon Reyna, Mendoza & Orejudos law firm, Sunvar said it had "good and valid defenses" against the government suit.

It said that aside from the lack of jurisdiction it had raised in its motion to dismiss, there were other grounds that warranted the outright dismissal of the expropriation case.

The statement signed by Mendoza-Ong recalls "Sunvar will raise them at the appropriate time but just the same, let us emphasize that at the heart of those defenses

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a of Women finally a law

New law empowers civilians to arrest abusers of women

By Tarra Quismundo

THE MAGNA CARTA OF WOMEN will pave the way for better enforcement of laws banning abuse of and discrimination against women, the Philippine National Police's top female official said yesterday.

Chief Supt. Yolanda Sangcaran, chief of the Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC), said the new law empowered civilians to arrest anyone caught in the act of abusing a woman.

Citizen's arrest

"If you see, you can execute a citizen's arrest," Sangcaran said.

The citizen's arrest clause is also present in other laws on women's protection, but its inclusion in the Magna Carta bolsters civilians' right to prevent abuse, she said.

The WCPC daily receives 5-10 complaints from women and children, mostly involving physical violence in the home.

"It's not an alarming figure. It only means that women are already aware of their rights ...," Enrique said.

She said the law also put more onus on the PNP on a level playing field with men in the force. "It empowers us in such a way that we have equal opportunity to prosecution. Right now, we have only two women generals ... There is still a need to improve [the system of prosecution]."

"After all the attempts to block the passage of the Magna Carta of Women, the Filipino women have finally emerged victorious. This is a byproduct of women's continuous struggle for equality and serves as a gateway in support of women's legitimate concerns," Mitra said in a statement.

She said she skipped the ceremonial signing of the measure because of purported previous attempts by the administration to water it down, specifically on provisions on reproductive health.

But Speaker Prospero Nograles and Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri, as well as other lawmakers who authored and sponsored the measure, witnessed the signing.

50-50 gender balance

Under Rights and Empowerment, RA 9710 mandates an incremental increase in the recruitment and training of women in the police force, because said medico-legal, legal services and social work services in the area. five years until they make up half the number of the personnel.

With the goal of ensuring the equitable representation of women to all spheres of society, the Magna Carta also provides for the incremental increase of women personnel in third-level government positions in the next five years to achieve a "50-50 gender balance."

It mandates that 40 percent of members of development councils in all government levels should be women, and that incentives be provided to political parties with women's agenda.

RA 9710 clearly states in Section 32 that the State should amend or repeal within three years any law discriminatory to women.

It grants women the right to security in armed conflict, as well as protection from all forms of gender-based violence such as rape, and prohibits the State from forcing women, especially indigenous women, to abandon their land or relocating them to special centers for military purposes under any "discriminatory condition."

The law mandates government personnel involved in the protection and defense of women to train in human rights and gender sensitivity.

It designates the CHR as the Gender and Development Ombudsman to ensure the promotion and protection of women's rights.

Equal access

The law also ensures women equal access to education and sports, and mandates the government to eliminate discrimination against women in the military and police, and bans the discriminatory portrayal of women in media and film.

It likewise ensures women's rights to health, food security, housing, decent work, livelihood, social protection and preservation of cultural identity, among others, and spells out equal rights in marriage and family, including a joint decision on the number and spacing of children.

More important, RA 9710 guarantees the civil, political, social and economic rights of women in marginalized sectors.

Rest Philippine Arroyo makes her way to Heroes of the Magna Carta of Women.

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OPINION

Hanging around

EDITORIAL

ONE OF THE BEST THINGS SOCIOECONOMIC Planning Secretary Ralph Recto has done for the country as well as for himself was to resign at this particular time. Recto bows out tomorrow as the first politician to head the National Economic and Development Authority after a 13-month tenure that was remarkable only because of his very public quarrel with Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes over the prices of gasoline and other oil products. He lost his crusade to bring the prices down by as much as P6 per liter, but it probably won him enough votes to return to the Senate next year after a failed bid for reelection in 2007.

Recto, whose resignation was received with ill-disguised relief by Malacañang Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he "wouldn't consider it a loss at all"), said he resigned to explore "all opportunities" for a political comeback, including another run for a Senate seat. He said that in leaving his Cabinet post, he was breaking the old practice of politicians to hang on to their positions for as long as the election law permits. By doing so, he said, he has deprived himself "of the soapbox which will make me visible and the bullhorn which will allow me to be heard" by Filipino voters. But being Meds chief is a full-time job, he added, and it was difficult to "run an office and run for an office at the same time."

That kind of thinking comes as a whiff of fresh air in a country where politicians start campaigning for the next election the day after they are sworn into office. Such a rare display of delicadeza provides a stark contrast to the shameless use of government resources by other Cabinet members and executive officials who are planning to run for elective office.

For Recto was no politician who let personal political affairs get in the way of his duties as an effective planchero for launching candidacies. The reality is that many politicians in government do not only take advantage of their position to promote themselves, they employ government resources to promote their political ambitions. Just look at the hundreds of billboards announcing projects of various government departments accompanied, of course, with pictures of top government officials. Consider also the "infomercials" purportedly presenting certain "advocacies" of various government departments and offices. It doesn't take a genius to figure out why the bunch of these agencies are featured prominently: those ads are intended to promote those officials more than the programs of their agencies. Thus, the officials the public pays to spend billions in ads these days are the same officials who are rumored to be planning to seek elective office or those who have actually announced that they would stand for elections.

Some officials say their appearance in such ads is merely incidental. Sure, and the fact that such ads have mushroomed close to election time is accidental.

Others claim there cannot be a better endorser of their agencies' programs than themselves. If so, our taipans and tycoons must have missed this particular lesson in marketing and advertising since they cannot be seen endorsing their products in TV ads.

National government agencies, not counting government corporations, have a combined appropriations of P1.13 billion for advertising this year. Imagine what that amount can do for Malacañang's favored candidates. No wonder there is no rush to follow Recto among members of the Cabinet.

Pressure on Burma

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE HERMISE REGIME EXTENDED ALONG SAN SUU KYI'S house arrest by 18 months. As usual, the government has stolen 1½ years of her freedom, and there is no guarantee that the regime will release her after she's served this latest sentence. The trial term is later branded "an insult."

Aung San Suu Kyi has become a symbol of the struggle for freedom—not only in Burma, but the world over. The international community must continue to put increasingly greater pressure on the Burmese regime to free her. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown has proposed a global ban on selling arms to Burma. The EU has warned that it may use "targeted measures" to punish those responsible for Monday's ruling against Suu Kyi.

That is the right approach. But what's especially important is that Burma's neighbors—as well as key countries like China, India and Russia—also put pressure on this desperate regime. For Burma, the release of Aung Suu Kyi first would be a step in the right direction.

Deguanxiao (Chile, Xinhua)

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The death of 'delicadeza'

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

REPEATABLE IN ALMOST EVERY HOUSE IN which I have stayed in this country, the question is asked, "Ti mag not ba illegal, but is it moral?" Such a question would not have arisen in an earlier time when a good home, social esteem, or a reputation for decency served more to people than being seen as law-abiding. Indeed, doing something merely to comply with the letter of the law signifying a failure of motivated calculation, often elicited wariness if not outright distrust. Outsiders instead, utilized sensitivity-use demanded particularly of those who occupied positions in the public realm.

Immediately in the background of this normative behavior is the long-standing distrust of its compelling spirit. Submission of formal compliance have operated in our process society, providing expert advice to those who refuse to be bound by the law but do not want to be punished for stepping out of bounds. They specialize in exploiting the ambiguities of feasible behavior. They spot the loopholes and capitalize on the lack of precision of legal provisions. They are among the noisiest members of the legal profession.

We see them at work everywhere, subverting the rules for purposes that undermine our legal order. They hide behind the expanded meanings of terms like "presidential prerogative" and "executive privilege." To them, everything that the law does not explicitly prohibits is permissible under the all-encompassing construction of presidential prerogative.

Brutal fools in additional incident enjoyed the same unaffected and powers than today's public officials. Yet they were restrained to the exercise of these powers by a strong sense of the moral responsibility attached to their status. That a select number of them did not have an adversary in our country but the habit of self-restraint nonetheless characterized the behavior of an early generation of Filipino leaders. It was known as delicadeza.

The term encountered stress, struggle, self-promotion, and the misuse of one's powers and prerogatives. The mechanisms for its enforcement were not the Ombudsman or the courts. No one needed to file any case in order to arrest and uphold what was proper. The mere loss of public esteem was more than enough to set things right. Heads always stomped power, and people did not hesitate to resign to protest what was left of their good name.

A President Quezon, or Roxas, or Osmeña or Magsaysay would have done everything to prevent the appearance of public extremes of wasteful spending while an official visit abroad. In the first place, one doubts very much if any of these former presidents would have brought with them such large retinues of government officials as President Macapagal. Examples like habitually dress on her foreign visits. None of them would have accepted a lavish dinner treat from a congressman, or much less used public money to host an extravagant and expensive champagne in an upscale eating place in a foreign city. They would have been very conscious of the impression that these practices would generate among the other guests. Self-restraint would have prevailed and restrained them at every turn.

But society have changed dramatically. The old values of tolerance are now being gone. The personal restraints provided by an ingrained sense of propriety have all but been eroded. The codes of conduct that have found their way into our laws have not been able to fulfill the same function. And the decline of moral consensus has not paved the way for the emergence of a strong legal system that could enable the legislature (1.93), and public officials (word version (1.8).

Second, of the 69 countries where the respondents answered the question on the extent of judicial corruption, 35 considered their judiciaries to have a greater extent of corruption (average score greater than 2.41), while 34 rated their judiciaries with the same score as the Philippines (2.41). In the Philippines, 1.8 of the 35 countries where judiciaries were given a higher corruption assessment, four were in the Asia Pacific (Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan and South Korea); four were in Europe (Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania and Romania); all eight of the Latin American countries surveyed had higher scores than the Philippines, with seven of them having scores higher than 4.0; five were among the Newly Independent States (eight countries surveyed); eight of the 16 Sub-Saharan African countries (the ninth had the same 2.4 score) and 2.0 of the Western European countries.

Third, the Philippine score on judicial corruption was lower than not just the Asia Pacific average, but the world's average as well (although this actually follows from the second source of comfort). Philippines—2.4; Asia Pacific—3.23; world (69 countries)—3.1.

And while we're at it, we might as well stretch our fact-good attempts to cover some other aspects of the GCB, although most of this exercise would more accurately fall under a "history lovers company" heading.

Let's start with what I consider the legit feel-good aspects:

Philippine media have an assessed corruption rating of 2.6—the average for all countries surveyed is 3.2. Only two countries—Brunei Darussalam (1.9) and Kenya (2.0) have lower corruption ratings. Three others (and I will not throw a wet blanket here by trying to distinguish between 7% ratios and point). Needless to say, among the six Philippine latest countries, media are "least corrupt" any which way you look at it.

Philippine business/private sector also rates very well. It is the second least corrupt (2.20), as far as Filipinos are concerned, and at a respondents comparison, only nine countries have better ratings (that is, considered "less corrupt": Brunei, Cambodia, Austria, Denmark, Finland, El Salvador, Georgia, and Namibia. The business sector in Estonia, Morocco and Armenia got the same rating from their citizens as Australia, Belgium and Japan.

Now for the sad awards:

Filipinos assess the extent of corruption in political parties as 4.8 (5 is the most corrupt (7 (5) citizens give the same corruption rating to their own political parties.

The assessed level of corruption in public officials and servants also at 4.07. The Asia Pacific and Latin America averages are also 4.0, with the Newly Independent States coming in at 4.4 (although this is mainly because of the weight of Russia, whose citizens rate their public officials at 5.0).

Only 23 percent of Filipinos think that the government's fight against corruption is effective! Well, guess what. The figure for Japan is 11 percent, South Korea is 16 percent. The GCB report shows that the effectiveness indicator for corruption ranking is as low or lower for the governments of 23 countries.

Eleven percent of Filipinos surveyed have paid bribes! That figure is 20 percent for Indonesia and 47 percent for Cambodia. Twenty-five of the countries surveyed show that at least 11 percent of respondents (going as high as 87 percent) have paid bribes in the 12 months preceding the survey.

Let's leave the bad news for next time.

Corruption in RP: a feel-good look?

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

IT CAUGHT MY EYE, THE NEWS ITEM THAT only 7 percent of Filipinos considered the Philippine judiciary to be corrupt. That can't be right, was my immediate reaction. At least, not after the Court of Appeals scandal, or after the numerous other judicial scandals that have come to public notice. So I returned back to the source of the data, which was the 2009 Global Corruption Barometer (GCB)—and was enough, the news reports had it wrong. That figure of 7 percent was the answer to the question: "Which of these six sectors (political parties, legislature, business or private sector, media, and public officials/civil servants, one can understand of corruption? The only 7 percent citizen in the GCB, however, also asks the question: "To what extent do you perceive the following institutions to be affected by corruption?" with the answers being on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning "not at all corrupt" and 5 meaning "extremely corrupt." The six listed institutions mentioned again listed. The average rating for the judiciary was 3.0. Here a one-to-improve that? Look at it this way: 3 is between 1 and 5. Anything below 3 is closer to the "not at all corrupt," and anything above 3 is closer to "extremely corrupt." That means that in the eyes of the Filipinos, the judiciary is rather more than less corrupt.

But while it is wrong to say that only 7 percent of Filipinos consider the judiciary to be corrupt, Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Puno, as head of the judicial branch of government, can take some comfort from the following results of the GCB survey on corruption:

First, the judiciary is perceived to be the least corrupt among the three branches of government: only 7 percent consider it the most corrupt, compared to the 26 percent who consider the Congress as the most corrupt branch, and the 26 percent who think public officials/civil servants rule the roles. It is also not considered as corrupt as political parties (4.0), media (2.6), business/private sector (2.2), and public officials/civil servants (4.1).

Second, of the 69 countries where the respondents answered the question on the extent of judicial corruption, 35 considered their judiciaries to have a greater extent of corruption (average score greater than 2.41), while 34 rated their judiciaries with the same score as the Philippines (2.41). In the Philippines, 1.8 of the 35 countries where judiciaries were given a higher corruption assessment, four were in the Asia Pacific (Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan and South Korea); four were in Europe (Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania and Romania); all eight of the Latin American countries surveyed had higher scores than the Philippines, with seven of them having scores higher than 4.0; five were among the Newly Independent States (eight countries surveyed); eight of the 16 Sub-Saharan African countries (the ninth had the same 2.4 score) and 2.0 of the Western European countries.

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Let's leave the bad news for next time.

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

Administration ratings, then and now

THEN. IN 1992, THE DAY BEFORE HER S.O.C.E.R.A. address was sworn in as president, I wrote in the Manila Chronicle [in italics below]:

How history will judge Cory depends a thousand or so years from now. But, by what the Filipino people—rather than by what columnists—think about her.

Since 1986, Filipinos in general (in contrast to Metro Manila residents) have given Cory Aquino a net positive performance rating. After a long honeymoon up to 1987, her rating dipped over 1988-89, and there after maintained at—a low but nevertheless positive level.

We know now that, in fact, the average net satisfaction ratings of Cory Aquino (respondents expressed those of all her successors up to 2008).

... Was Cory right, in her last SONA speech, "Reflections on Our Anniversary," in denying that her performance rating "has been static"?

The "static" should be "minimal (1989)," as was clear performance ratings for the national administration on many subjects, but none using the term "breakthrough" or "triumph." In some matters, such as (a) the preparations for the last election, (b) working for a peaceful society, (c) telling the truth, (d) hard work, and (e) protecting the environment, public dissatisfaction dominates over dissatisfaction, as of April 1992.

In other areas, however, such as (f) fighting inflation, (g) fighting graft and corruption, (h) advertising to life without the U.S. bases, (i) fighting crime, (j) solving the foreign debt problem, and (k) managing domestic political public dissatisfaction dominates over satisfaction. ...

So the reality is that the public has regarded the Cory administration as strong in some respects and weak in others. The dissensus is neither all black nor all white, as those pundits who would paint it to be only one color sought not to be taken seriously.

Incidentally, the SWS survey questions on public satisfaction with the national administration began only in 1989—semi-annual up to 1991 and quarterly beginning in 1992, i.e. entirely after the "honeymoon period." The net rating started at a high +33 in February 1986; went to a low -38 in December 1990, and ended at a neutral -3 in April 1992.

Now Malacañang's mood seemed to have improved this week, after the Aug. 10 release of the public's ratings of the national administration, per the June 2009 SWS survey.

SWS found 52 percent satisfied and 42 percent dissatisfied with the national administration's performance, for a net rating of 11 (nominally satisfied), or in the "four" range defined by scientific SWS in 2003.

The report noted a "Good" net rating of +40 with respect to protecting the public from outbreak of diseases, and "Moderate" ratings on foreign relations (+24), promoting the welfare of overseas Filipino workers (+22), fighting terrorism (+12), ensuring that ministers are efficient (+14), campaigning against illegal drugs (+10), and helping the poor (+10). The SWS term "Good" starts at +30, while the term "very good" starts at +50.

The public's ratings of reconciliation with Muslim rebels (+9), protecting the Philippines from the economic crisis (+5) and other calamities/emergencies (+4), and fighting crimes (+1) are called "Neutral" because single-digit net ratings are statistically indistinguishable from zero.

The ratings of fighting inflation (-13), ensuring that no family will ever be hungry and have nothing to eat (-21), and eradicating graft and corruption in the government (-21) are called "Poor," which starts at -10. None of the issues scored as "Bad" or "very bad," which start at -30 and -50 respectively.

Nine of eleven issues with two consecutive trending bad scores higher than the previous quarter.

Social Climate

Mahar Mangahas

The press secretary said Bautista-Arellano found "skepticism" in the report. The deputy presidential spokesman called the improvements "a welcome development," yet said it does not change President Macapagal-Arroyo's basic philosophy of "governing for performance and posterity, not popularity."

It should be noted that ratings of the national administration are taken separately from, and simultaneously with, the ratings of the President. Thus the public has positive feelings about certain undertakings of the national executive branch even while having long-run negative feelings about President Macapagal-Arroyo herself.

Compare that to 1992, when the public had negative feelings about certain undertakings of the Aquino administration, even while having long-run positive feelings about President Aquino herself.

As of 1992, the appearance of the government to the Filipino people in 2009 is neither all black nor all white. The truth is that Filipinos are capable of distinguishing shades and hues in government performance. Moreover, what they are well may sour time. Such survey findings tend to be front-ending for political purposes, some of whom see the 1992 experience, while others think that it will public. Actually, it just appears what new numbers it gets, without change.

Back to June 1992 ... Cory said, in her speech on 1.H.S., that she knew that poverty alleviation should be her primary concern, but admitted that "we didn't have a clear idea of how to go about it."

Cory's speech had the line: "If the politicians continue to ignore the people and people's organizations, they will be repeatedly punished at the polls until attention restores the rule of law."

I like that [and still do], because the work of surveying public opinion is premised on a faith that, in separating the conditions of society, the people's evaluation is the bottom line.

* * *

Contact SWS: www.sws.org.ph or mahar@sws.org.ph/@sws.org.ph.

Rebels have fun

TALK ABOUT SUBSIDIES. I JUST LEARNED THAT MY friend back in my freshman year was pregnant. It has been two years since I dubbed to another country... two years since I last saw her, two years since I heard anything about her. And now, this. She just texted: 19 and she's having a baby. And I'm jealous.

Jealous not because she is pregnant, but because something is happening to her life, something other than re-entering the rotation of returns, washing noses and listening to lectures. My life, on the other hand, is an intermission. I would register in a straight line in a random direction. I have been in this limbo for a while now, but that I am envious of someone who is probably having the worst internal conflict she has ever experienced.

Looking back on all the homework I got done, the household choices I have finished the it grudgingly or not), and all the subjects I have "passed with flying colors," I begin to wonder if they are what make me think my life is boring. How can I possibly be dying to myself that doing right does not seem to matter to anyone anymore?

I can say "realize" till I seem, but what do I have all the fun. They break all the rules, and if they get caught, they say sorry (and at least pretend to be so) and promise never to do it again. Life goes on. It's just too bad I didn't figure it out sooner, so that nobody bothered to tell me.

However, I had a bit of a hypocrite for thinking I have "done right" all my life. I know that I made good in school and earned a few honors. I choose to be. But if it were bad, some of it was, well, something else... I did study for exams, homes, days or even weeks before, but it wasn't as if I didn't decide to ask a roommate she assisted for cadaver or the formulas for multiple-event probabilities. I suddenly understood how the big mindset of my high school bandmate have left. You see, she never cheated during exams, not even when the whole class was doing it. In turn, every one thought she was a nerd—even me, and she was one of my friends.

So what? It was just a bit of cheating. It's not something that would get you kicked out of school, and a little voice in my head. Oh, the burden of reason. The moment I convince myself about something, my mind finds a way around it. I say know it's true, I allowed the voice to say "What you did wasn't entirely wrong", otherwise, you wouldn't have felt like doing many rule-breaking right now.

Now, that's one. I am still feeling the lack of danger and excitement affected by stepping out of line.

Really, has anybody ever gotten famous for always sticking to the rules? Heck, even Jesus Christ is considered a rebel. Famous persons, when rank in oblivion, regain fame the moment they do something unbelievable. Stories of success, whether they be rags-to-riches, addiction-to-sobriety or captive-to-emancipation, all have a common character: the rebel. Claiming the title has a certain appeal that never fails to get people searching for an opportunity to do it, or maybe just watch other people do it. And it may not just be about wanting to do it, but actually needing to do it. As Oscar Wilde once said, "Disobedience, in the eyes of anyone who has read history, is man's original virtue. It is through disobedience that progress has been made, through disobedience and through rebellion." One cannot change if one doesn't rebel against oneself.

Hence, my heroines. I have been such a people pleaser all my life, always seeking others' approval to everything I do, so don't do. And now I end up a cliché, pleasing everyone but myself. The one named to stop doing what someone else would want me to, and I'm too scared to start doing what I want to do. I can't rebel against myself.

I guess it will always be like this: always choosing to be so and so—maybe until I remember worth, being a rebel for. And if luck would be by my side, maybe I'll get the chance to be rocked without displeasing anybody.

But right now, I still have things to settle with that little voice. I still have to argue the difference between being rebellious and being plain sinful. I hope I will win this time.

Norma D. Cabuello, 19, is an Open University Worldwide Communications student at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

Notice to Youngblood contributors:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course or office where you're employed or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

Young Blood

Norma D. Cabuello

My answer to [some what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the views/something said below—Ed.]

They Said

Great gift

"What a great gift the Lord gave us at his. What a great gift our heavy load."
—Bishop Broderick S. Pabillo on Ninoy Aquino's death at the airport in the absence of former President Corazon C. Aquino

No need

"Malacañang doesn't have to give honor in my mom because the honor comes from the country."
—Kris Aquino, on her mother's decision not to attend the 40 days commemoration after ex-pres her mother's own funeral

Our turn

"The time of Ninoy is over. The time of Cory has passed. It's our turn to change history and shape our own destiny."
—Ninoy professor Rafael Aquino

Wrong was

"When 3,600 Filipinos are forced to leave the country daily for their families' survival, then this government is definitely doing something wrong."
—Solidarity Philippines Chair of the United Filipinos in Hong Kong

Gcina the storyteller

HOW APPROPRIATE THAT THE FIRST PUBLIC appearance of recent visiting artist from South Africa, Gcina Mhlophe-Berdan, was an afternoon-turn at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) with education. The topic was child-literature through storytelling and she was there not for a performance but for a dialogue. But because Gcina is such a consummate and impassioned artist, even in her more "serious" mode she told a first-class performance in itself. She is her own person who found yourself in with an international reputation and one of a mere handful of women engaged in the revered tradition of story telling.

It is difficult to tell where her personal narrative ends and her storytelling begins because there is more than a tinge presence. "Artist" suddenly sounds too effete and too generic a word to capture all that Gcina is. Small your homely: poet, playwright, actor, director, storyteller, author. In every incarnation she is a formidable fighter. Her strong political views inform and inspiration her life and her art, her reasons for being. And does her all the difference.

Gcina staunchly declares that it is not just the love for stories that drives her craft, but her love for her country's culture, her heritage and tradition, and her passion for children's rights.

Gcina credits her grandmother who raised her as the one who first initiated her into storytelling. "She taught me everything .... When I was growing up, half the kids in our neighborhood would come and spend the evenings at home so that they could listen to stories," Gcina recalls, "Tony Mother Google may be wonderful, but no one can be as good as my grandmother," she who first allowed her imagination to fly unbridled.

Gcina addresses the rewarding of storytellers who are still in our midst, but we be completely

Commentary

Nemi Sta. Romana Cruz

bereft of the oral tradition. This crusade to promote and preserve the ancient art form grew into the Zamdondela Storytellers. Zamdela is a beautiful Zulu word that means "living/will me a story."

Stories should be in the school curriculum where they belong, Gcina says. A slogan she adhered to: "Teachers Learn to tell stories." Gcina never aspired to be a teacher but she may as well be one, with all the time she spends today before groups of children, delighting them with her stories. When a teacher in the audience introduced herself much too modestly as being "just a teacher," Gcina led the listeners in a loud protest, extolling the special power bestowed on teachers.

Using her celebrity to promote the issues that mean most to her, she has been involved in fundraising campaigns to gather boxes of books for donation to communities with no access to learning materials. She will also be celebrated her 50th birthday late year—and she hopes to replicate that at her next birthday.

"I will stories in southern stories in other pro. ple." Stories that she finds should live on through generations. One of her most powerful stories is her childhood memory of walking the distance with her father who was proudly pointing out new landmarks to her. He named tall and proud bushes but, her named into a different, subservient being as they entered a permanent office during the dark days of apartheid. When Gcina recited her powerful and poignant poetry celebrating freedom, the dedicates there verses to all the leaders who have been unjustly humiliated before their children.

Gcina speaks of a well remembered day in her country's recent history, 4th. 11, 1990, the thirteen day South African icon Nelson Mandela was released from 27 years in prison. That too, was a story to tell.

Gcina's story many other roles in a lighter, happier vein, told for more than entertainment value. Tales of animals familiar to the solids of the African landscape who trick one another, or two human animals ascending for a party exclusive by only the those with horns. Such cruelty in the animal world is mirrored in the lives of children, as well.

This unprecedented intensive of the Embassy of the Republic of South Africa to bring in a local artist to the CCP was in every way unforgettable. This was certainly more than your regular cultural exchange for as Ambassador Nesbe Mandebe explained, the series of week-long performances are the Manila embassy's way to honor the country's first democratically elected president. Mandela, on his 91st birthday last July 18. Mandela Day is envisioned to be a day dedicated to community service, leaving an imprint of all that Mandela and South Africa stand for.

Thus, the performances for under-served groups of children especially found in the CCP for the very least. What a moving and mind-blowing gesture for a well-loved leader, through the words of African traditional tales and the spoken word.

Nemi Sta. Romana Cruz is a member of the Philippine Board on Books for Young People and of the Foundation for Worldwide Peace Power, and a trustee of the de Akbar Student Foundation. Email comments to nemisrc@gmail.com.

Business unhappy with GMA performance

A RECENT ARTICLE IN A LOCAL DAILY QUOTED Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Edgardo Cardenas saying, "...as far as the economy is concerned, they are satisfied because the country has not entered into a recession and they think the economy will grow by 1.5 percent this year." Lucson is entitled to his view, but I disagree that the rest of the business sector is happy with President Macapagal-Arroyo's economic management.

Many in the business sector feel the Arroyo administration has failed to deliver satisfactory performance based on three criteria: (1) competitiveness, (2) employment, (3) export growth. (4) foreign direct investments, and (5) fiscal stability.

Competitiveness. The World Economic Competitiveness Yearbook last May revealed that out of 57 countries, the Philippines ranked 43rd in competitiveness, the worst among 13 Asia Pacific countries. Based on four broad factors, we ranked 56th in supply infrastructure, 51st in economic performance, 42nd in government efficiency, and 32nd in business efficiency. The Global Competitiveness Index, published by the World Economic Forum last year, reflected equally depressing results—we ranked 71st out of 134 countries surveyed.

The most problematic factor cited for doing business in the Philippines was corruption. Foreign investors attribute the worse of corruption as one of the greatest hindrances to making long-term direct investments in the Philippines. In February 2008, the Hong Kong-based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy cited the Philippines 8.33 in terms of corruption risk. "1" being the best score and "10" the worst. It added, "Although corruption is a major problem in a number of Asian countries, it is most pervasive in the Philippines." Transparency International's 2008 Corruption Perceptions Index cited the Philippines suffering a significant deterioration in the eyes of the foreign community at 61 (29 countries rank) declined from a range of 46.55 during the

Business Matters

Jose L. Catalan Jr.

1995-1998 period to an unbelievably low level of 102.141 from 2004-2008. It is sad to have statements that the Philippines is perceived as the most corrupt nation in Asia.

It is distressing that competitiveness has deteriorated. Clearly, on this aspect the country has fared poorly under GMA's administration.

Employment. Despite GMA's repeated promise to create 1 million new jobs a year, the highest unemployment rate since 1995 of 11.8 percent was recorded in 2004 (source: National Statistics Office, Neda). During the Ramos administration, unemployment rate was between 8.1 percent and 10.1 percent. Arroyo allies may point out that the unemployment rate declined to 7.4 percent in 2008, but may not mention that the number of deployed overseas Filipino workers has ballooned from 686,461 in 1995 to 1,076,822 in 2008, growing 8.1 million from 2000. How may unfilled come-double counting because some OFWs go home after the end of their contract then leave again for new jobs). Simply put, the current administration has not been able to create enough jobs locally.

Exports. The Philippines experienced some good growth in its export industries during the Ramos administration when export growth ranged from a low of 11.1 percent in 1991 to a high of 29.6 percent in 1995. Unfortunately, under the Arroyo administration, export growth has slowed to an average of 2.9 percent in 2001-2008 (a high of 14.9 percent in 2006, slowing down further to 6.6 percent in 2007 and experiencing a negative growth of 2.7 percent in 2008. The Arroyo administration's average export growth rate is only 6.34 percent, comparing dismally to the 16.9 percent average growth rate of the Ramos administration (source: National Statistics Office).

Foreign direct investments. The Arroyo administration can claim to have done better here than past administrations. The highest level net FDI of $2.92 billion was posted in 2006-2007 (source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas). Average FDI under the Arroyo administration (2001-2008) was $1.316 billion versus $1.369 billion average net FDI under the Ramos administration. However, during GMA's tenure, we also lost two major long-term investors—Intel and FedEx which relocated to Vietnam and China, respectively. Moreover, the Arroyo administration's share of net direct foreign investments in terms of amount, the Philippines has nonetheless received much less FDI than Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Fiscal stability. The highest fiscal deficit ever recorded was experienced (P321 billion or 5.1 percent of GDP) occurred in 2005. While the administration must be credited for convincing Congress to pass the Expanded Value Added Tax Law which contributed significantly to reducing the fiscal deficit to less than 1 percent of GDP, the Philippines' overall tax effort (ratio of total tax revenues/GDP), declining from a high of 17 percent in 1997 to a low of 13.3 percent in the first quarter of 2009. The highest tax effort by this administration reached only 14.3 percent in 2006.

Assessing the above criteria, the Philippine business community can conclude that President Arroyo has been less than satisfactory and therefore I cannot agree with the PCCI view that Philippine business is happy with how the government has managed our economy.

Jose L. Catalan Jr. is co-convener of the Akbayan Business Club and chair of the Coalition Against Corruption. Please send your comments to makisi@business.club@mic.com.ph.

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Really, it wasn't Malacañang?

THE 8 IN REACTION TO THE editorial, "Outrageous spending," (Inquirer, 8/11/09)

For once we would like to suggest that the buy-out accept what Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said—that the Le Cirque dinner in honor of the Arroyos, who celebrated their wedding anniversary, was just a "simple" one and not so sumptuous.

Outrageous spending has long been the trademark of this government under President Macapagal-Arroyo. Just look at the several dozens of foreign trips she and her cohorts have accumulated. Had she been flying the state commercial airline all those times she could have earned the company's most frequent traveler award many times over.

What is $20,000 to her? Pronto, she could have reclaimed. If she could afford to give away P500,000 to her favorite congressmen and governors in their drinking palors. Inside that shining river where snakes hiss and lapdogs salivate, what is 91 million to spend in that posh New York restaurant where the rich and the famous dine and wine with hedonistic abandon?

And Remonde, as host (who would pay the bill), would've appreciate it if the guests, in return favor you give a "blowout" to, or donor the most expensive food and drinks".

We don't have the slightest doubt that it was for them just a simple dinner. But we certainly doubt if it was somebody else who footed the $20,000 bill for that simple dinner.

—RAMON SEPULVEDA,
CebBaypo@aol.com

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LETTERS

Lea's 'Bayan Ko' stirs memories

AT 3 ROCHESTER ADA SALONGA sang "Bayan Ko" during the Requiem Mass for former President Cory Aquino on national television. I could not avoid reminiscing the newer memories for 1986.

During that time, the people had only one purpose—to topple the dictatorship and bring back democracy in our shattered and oppressed nation. We were one people, shouting "multitudes having mutated," "Lamo na, cobra na" with clenched fists. I surprised to have been part of that struggle.

As I listened to the song, I felt the urge of going back to the streets and help execute this country from extinction.

—EFFRON S. BIGAEL
Danang Bacnan City

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) announces that Co-amoxiclav (Augmentin®), Telmisartan (Prince™) and Telmisartan+Hydrochlorothiazide (Prince Plus™) are now available to Filipino patients at

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We will continue to find ways to help more Filipinos do more, feel better and live longer. Ask your doctor about how you can benefit from these treatments.

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Augmentin 228.5mg/5ml (Amoxicillin 200mg + Clavulanic Acid 28.5mg) Suspension (70ml)	bot	90.00	45.00
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Augmentin 1.2g (Amoxicillin 1000mg + Clavulanic Acid 200mg) inj	vial	180.00	90.00
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Augmentin 1.2g (Amoxicillin 1000mg + Clavulanic Acid 200mg) inj	vial	180.00	90.00
Cefobid IV (Cefoperazone 1000mg + Sulbactam 1000mg) Powder for Injection	vial	1,200.00	600.00
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Cefobid IV (Cefoperazone 1g) inj	vial	600.00	300.00
Cefobid IV (Cefoperazone 500mg) inj	vial	300.00	150.00
Cefobid IV (Cefoperazone 2g) inj	vial	1,200.00	600.00
Cefobid IV (Cefoperazone 1g) inj	vial	600.00	300.00
Cefobid IV (Cefoperazone 500mg) inj	vial	300.00	150.00
Cefobid IV (Cefoperazone 2g) inj	vial	1,200.00	600.00
Cefobid IV (Cefoperazone 1g) inj	vial	600.00	300.00
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Co-amoxiclav (Augmentin 228.5mg/5ml Susp. 70ml)	bot	90.00	45.00
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Cory Aquino: not a slave to her wealth

JOHN NERI'S COLUMN TITLED "How do we know she wasn't a saint?" (Inquirer, 8/4/09) may sound somewhat shocking to our secular ears, but he certainly has a point. I remember a priest years ago saying to our elders dead that sanctity consists of the capacity, through God's grace, existing in one entity "in a heroic degree." In other words, a virtue done to the max.

Well, how about courage? Is her down a distance and overcome the tyrant by turning the democratic and bring back democracy in our shattered and oppressed nation. He wrote one people, shouting "multitudes having mutated," "Lamo na, cobra na" with clenched fists. I surprised to have been part of that struggle.

As I listened to the song, I felt the urge of going back to the streets and help execute this country from extinction.

—EFFRON S. BIGAEL
Danang Bacnan City

Higher and bigger than public servants

THIS HAS REFERENCE TO THE letter of Jarvis Valencia, president of DENSO, Mitsuoka, saying the union's opposition to the full transfer of DOSC offices to Barangay 4-A and 4-B from Roxas Boulevard, Manila, to Calamba City (Laguna) and Cebu City (Mindanao Oriental), respectively, as mandated by Executive Orders 402 and 366. (Inquirer, 8/3/09)

Being employees ourselves, we understand how hard it is to move from one workplace to another. That is why my office has lobbied with the concerned departments so that the affected employees will get their lawful relocation allowances.

Our campaign of a new government center (NGC) is encouraging community where there are structures for government offices, including such amenities as a commercial center, housing project, schools (pre-school, elementary, school and high school, if necessary), and sports facilities. The idea is to make the NGC a livable community for relocated employees and their families.

We beg to disagree with Valencia that the transfer is a form of outsourcing. It is simply the right thing to do. It is unreasonable for the regional offices of Region 4-A and 4-B to continue to cater in Manila when their services are needed in Calabarzon and Mimaropa (a which they belong by force of law.

Thus, there are no direct monies by boat or by plane to Windsor to-clear. But that is precisely our aim, aiming many that the NGC program is continued to deal with.

The program does not stop with the establishment of the NGC. Apart from the objective of decongesting Metro Manila, it also seeks to spread development, especially in the more depressed regions like Mimaropa, Caraga, provision of critical infrastructure, transportation and communications facilities that will effectively link the rest of the region and the country to Calapan is a basic requirement of regional development. We would like to think that, if fully implemented, the NGC program will generate employment opportunities and local job opportunities and, thus, provide the base LGUs and regions the necessary economic stimulus to within the raging global economic crisis.

Contrary to Valencia's claim, President Macapagal always has considered the concerns and issues mentioning the transfer of the Department of Agrarian Reform to Davao City and the Department of Agriculture to Baguio, Isabela. The truth is, since the DAR gets the necessary budget for the construction of its offices, the DA gets the full transfer of its central office (CO) in Davao City, where it currently maintains a satellite CO, will follow. Similarly, the DA will open its satellite CO in Baguio the moment the [illegible] of agreement between the Isabela provincial government and DA is signed.

Transferring from one workplace to another is certainly a painful experience. But there are objectives higher and bigger than the individual employees. Public service is such, and so is regional development. Painful as it may be, the government public servants owes it to the public interest to do so.

—VICTOR E. DOMINGO,
presidential adviser,
Office of the Presidential Adviser for Northern Mindanao Concerns,
Malacañang

Naia 1 security compromised by TRO

THE MANILA INTERNATIONAL Airport Authority (MIAA) since got clearance against Transnational Products Inc. (TNP) for compromising the safety and security of passengers at Naia 1 by refusing to vacate its concession area for which its lease had already expired.

I am referring to the subject of Gerardo Batad's Aug. 11 column in which he narrated how the TNP ran to the Manila RTC to stop the MIAA from taking over one of its concession areas. The MIAA wanted that area back to increase the floor space for the final security check at the Naia.

I mean, what is more important—the income generated by TNP from its snack bar at the Naia departure lounge or the convenience of passengers using the services of the snack bar?

Naia 1 is already cramped, so it is understandable if MIAA should rationalize the use of its floor space according to its priorities. And can there be a greater priority than increasing operational space for the terminal's final security check?

The problem with our courts, specifically their wanton issuance of temporary restraining orders (TROs), is that in entertaining even the most untenable lawsuits, they tend to stop government from doing its duty to promote public interest.

It is hoped and that TRO even disrupted the assurances put up by government-owned Duty Free Philippines, emboldened by a TRO it got from the Manila court. Then action done by the TNP must prompt the MIAA to also kick the TNP out of its new and concessionaire area.

—MIKAELA MENDEZ,
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INQUIRER Visayas

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Cruising the 'Golden River' of Basey

By Vicente S. Labao
Basey, Samar

THE CADAC-AN RIVER HAS played a significant role in the history of the ancient town of Basey in Samar province.

It got its name from being the biggest river in the area, with the mouth currently measuring about 300 meters.

Basey was originally located near the river's mouth, in a place now known as Barangay Hamugan-an. Like other early coastal settlements, it was not spared from pillaging by the Moro marauders, which resulted in the inhabitants being moved a few kilometers north of Hinagdo-an to its present site.

Because of the Moro raids, people living in villages along the river bank had to move deeper into the uplands, some of them venturing into caves now known as the Sohoton Caves. Archeological diggings in the 1960s uncovered graves of early people inside one of the Sohoton caverns.

During the Philippine-American War, in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Filipino revolutionaries established a camp atop a cave, now called Pandulagan, at the confluence of the Cadac-an and Sohoton rivers. From their vantage point, they would throw bamboo spears and drop boulders into the river when an enemy boat was passing by.

The Americans, however, were able to eventually overrun the camp in the late 1901.

The Cadac-an River has also been a major reference in the environmental destruction of the mountains of Basey by a commercial logging firm, which, according to the mayor, had encircled itself and left nothing to the poor municipality. Thousands of logs were floated on the river and dragged to the outside world from the 1960s until the early 1980s.

It was probably the logging operations that caused the elimination of the river and changed its color from clear to light brown. The locals, however, see a golden hue and started calling it the Golden River.

Protected area

In 2008, in a move to preserve the natural beauty of the area, Sohoton Enterprise Association and Mabini, the furthest upstream village, the government declared protected the 900-hectare Sohoton Bridge Natural Park, which could be reached through the Golden River.

The natural park boasts of caves with magnificent stalactites, stalagmites and other rock formations, and of a natural bridge, an arch-shaped rock that connects two ridges over the river below.

Hundreds of tourists visit Basey every year, lured by the beauty of the park, particularly the spectacular Sohoton Caves.

The number has kept growing through the years such that the Sohoton Caves would eventually become the most frequently visited place in Eastern Visayas, according to the Department of Tourism regional office.

The growth in tourism prompted the DOT in cities locals to become professional service providers to visitors.

Skills training that included cave guiding, kayaking and food preparation were conducted last year, participated in by members of people's organizations, such as the Sohoton Services Association (SSA), Basey Tourism Association (Batosan) and the Basey Community-Based Resource Management. Each group has about 30 members.

The idea was to create a pool of service personnel for tourism and provide more income in the community.

While in the past, tourists had to take a one-hour tedious motorboat trip to reach the national park, today they travel in style and take a leisure ride by boat—an open pavilion on top of twin outriggers—that serves food, provides entertainment and allow them to see the landscape.

The river cruise is run by the municipal tourism office, in coordination with people's organizations whose members were trained to become professional guides under the DOT's Ecotourism Product Development Livelihood Project, with the support of Basey Mayor Wilfredo Intactano.

The cost

For the cruise, municipal tourism officer Evangelina Silaga said a 4WDB-for is collected per person for a group of at least 20 for the trip in the caves, inclusive of food and guided tour inside.

Silaga said the number of food and foreign tourists who took the river cruise from May 18 to July 15 alone had reached 2218. "This did not include the passengers on the maiden voyage of the river boat during its soft opening on May 11, which numbered 61," she said.

Tourists not going to the caves can also take the cruise at P600 per person for a group of similar size. The package will include a meal, but the passengers had to functionally in Sitio Hamis, from where they could go either to the Balicuatro Falls Nature Park or to the Rawis Cave near the inland. Separate charges are collected for either destination.

People who want to paddle their way to the Sohoton Caves from Barangay Inocian can rent kayaks. The package includes a guide and life vest of life jackets.

On Aug. 9, to host then President Macapagal-Arroyo visited the area, took an adventure cruise and explored the magnificent Sohoton Caves.

In 2005, she declared the Central Philippines as the premier tourist destination in the country under her super region program. It comprises of Palawan, Mount Pinatubo, Central Visayas, Eastern Visayas, Bicol, Boracay, Siargao and Dapitan/Dipolog.

Central Philippines boasts of unique natural wonders, white beaches, vast forest reserves and diverse ecosystems, among others.

Silaga revealed that her office is providing free guide services to tourists who want to go to other places in Basey, especially in the town proper where visitors could see most structures standing in homes or go to the century-old stone church of Basey and other places.

Improvements

Ronie Tropa, tourism regional director, disclosed that the DOT plans to put up a modern jetty port at Barangay Hinagdo-an to best serve the tourists. The port would include a jetty terminal with a ticket booth, souvenir shop and comfort rooms.

There will also be a river promenade, tourist center and parking space.

Two small jetty terminals will also be established in Barangay Inocian and at the Sohoton Caves area. The terminal in Inocian would have cottages where tourists could stay overnight or for days. The one at the Sohoton Caves entrance would serve as rest stop for tourists.

The Sohoton Caves would also be lighted and the trails inside improved, according to Tropa.

Basey, a coastal town about 35 kilometers away from Tacloban City, could be reached from Tacloban by a 45-minute land trip passing through the picturesque San Juanico Bridge. Tacloban, on the other hand, is just an hour away from Manila by plane. Flights from Cebu to Tacloban are also available.

KAYAKING from Barangay Inocian to the Sohoton Caves.

SEIKO
Me.

THE BEST SERVICE FOR SEIKO & ALBA WATCHES AT THESE SEIKO BOUTIQUES
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30th Anniversary
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A SCENE along the Golden River in Basey, Samar

Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Massive search for loose firearms set

Puno says cops to scour villages after Oct. 31

STA. CRUZ, DAVAO DEL SUR—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo has ordered the police to conduct a massive search in villages for illegal firearms starting in November, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said here on Thursday.

Puno, who attended the Southern Mindanao peace and order council's meeting, said he also ordered volunteers in various villages to help the police in conducting the massive search, which will start as soon as the amnesty for illegal firearms holders expires on Oct. 31.

"All persons carrying unlicensed firearms will be arrested and prosecuted after Oct. 31," he said.

He said the campaign was aimed at making the 2010 elections violence-free.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) had attributed election violence to the proliferation of loose firearms.

"This is not martial law but we have to search the villagers because this will help [maintain] peace and order, especially during the coming elections," Puno said.

He estimated that there are more than a million loose firearms in the country.

"Half of these have expired licenses or [are] unregistered, while the other half is currently in the hands of threat groups, criminal elements and unauthorized individuals all over the country, including Mindanao," Puno said.

He said schools, for example, which is identified as one of the areas with a large number of loose firearms, at least 2,500 police volunteers have been deputized for the search.

Puno said auxiliary police members will be issued combat uniforms they could help in the campaign.

Shortly after Puno's arrival here, two persons, including a village chief, were arrested for carrying unlicensed guns, Senior Insp. Daniel Landa, of the Traffic Management Group, said.

Landa said Rodolfo Uy, village chief of Pongyong in Sto. Marie town, yielded a .45-cal. pistol when frisked at a mobile checkpoint in Magsaysay town.

In Barangay Sinawilan in Digos City, a militiaman was also arrested when he could not show documents in connection with the 30 cal. rifle he was found in his possession.

Chief Supt. Dulve Tinga, Southern Mindanao police director said he already met with police commanders in connection with the intensified anti-illegal firearms campaign in November.

Tinga said government officials, soldiers, policemen and militiamen raided and he opened fire in the campaign.

"After the last day and beyond the gun amnesty period, there will be a serious enforcement of the law against loose firearms. Those who fail in total disobedience of the program will go to jail," Puno said.

He warned holders of illegal firearms that there will be no more amnesty after Oct. 31. Orlando Dimay with a report from Judy Quirino, Inquirer Mindanao

RESIDENTS of Quintin Remo, a village in Misamis Public, Negros Occidental, use a makeshift bridge to cross a creek, one of several that reports said deformed the community of at least 200 people.

Cebu gov says sorry for land mess

The admission of negligence by Governor Gwen Garcia ... does not exculpate her ...'

By Dionnen Magallanes
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—CEBU GOV. GWENDOLYN Garcia apologized to the people of Cebu for what she said were lapses in the purchase of a coastal property that was partly submerged in seawater and filled with mangroves.

Garcia made the public apology after a survey by the provincial government showed that 9.3 ha of the 23-ha property the province bought in Naga town in 2008 was under water.

The property, owned by the Bahil family, was acquired by the province for P98 million.

Self-proclaimed assigned counsel for Undersecretary Jaime Bautista later claimed that while P98.3 million was paid by the government for the property, Amparo Bahil, the widow of Luis Bahil, claimed she only received P63 million.

On Thursday, Garcia admitted that, indeed, portion of the lot was submerged in water or filled with mangroves.

"But I say I am sorry. As your governor I continue to believe in the Cebuanos and I'll be careful from now on," Garcia said on Thursday.

Lawyer Marissa Martinpolla, provincial attorney, was expected to issue a demand letter to the Bahil camp to refund P35.3 million.

Garcia's critics, however, challenged the Ombudsman to investigate further and file cases against provincial officials.

John Osmeña, former senator, sent a letter to the Ombudsman Monday on Friday, asking the assigned office to examine the deal closely saying Garcia's statement could not erase her liabilities, criminally and administratively.

"The admission of negligence by Governor Gwen Garcia ... does not exculpate her from criminal and administrative liability," said Osmeña in his letter to the Ombudsman.

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INQUIRER

Monthly, our Research Department will collate the results which will be posted in the Inquirer. Entries filled with good-thinking/generous ideas/innovative approach/ provocative opinion will receive surprise prizes.

Villagers told to leave for good as cracks grow

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE GOVERNMENT HAS recommended the permanent evacuation of residents from a town that has suffered from massive soil erosion starting last week.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in Western Visayas made the recommendation following the destruction of several houses when cracks swallowed them in Quintin Remo, a village in Moises Padilla, Negros Occidental.

At least seven dicta (tall-village) were flood on high risk areas as the ground kept moving every 15 minutes and the cracks kept growing bigger each day, according to an MGB report on Friday.

The MGB recommended that at least one area, Mawasi, be declared as man's land and its residents be barred from returning, even to work in farms, especially during rains.

MGB also warned that the continuous rains might bring mudflows and floods.

The main crack in the ground-area now estimated to be six km long, and the number of families in danger was 91 as of Friday, according to town Mayor Faustino Sauerosa.

Leo Juguan, MGB regional director in Western Visayas, said the danger zone should be cleared of houses and a permanent relocation site should be found for residents.

He said the ground would remain unstable even after the rains.

The phenomenon brought cracks and ground movement to the sitios of Ubay-Ubay, Guyamon, Tea, Nabuntolan Tigbauja, Lower and Upper Mawasi.

Jonathan Flores, 43, said his two-ha rice terrace farm moved almost 62 ft from its original location.

"This is the first time this happened to our place," said Flores, who has lived in nito-Mawasi all his life.

Some of the rice fields that used to be low-lying grounds in Mawasi were now on top of a hill, while spring water is flowing from the cracks in the ground.

At least 16 mini lakes had formed in the areas.

The MGB said the "mass movement in Barangay Quintin Remo was caused by a combination of factors, such as the steep slope, unconsolidated and clayey soil and rocks, and the huge amount of water in a landslide dam."

Mac Magpayo, MGB officer-in-charge, said in her report that heavy rains, combined with abundant spring water, overwhelmed the soil and rock fragments in the area.

Magpayo said chunks of soil and rocks the size of cars were detached from the mountain slopes and fell into the valley.

She said areas have been "deformed," resulting in low-lying areas becoming elevated and some areas sinking.

The springs also emitted foul odor, according to Ibrihim Ibrisam, head of the Provincial Disaster Management Division.

Tesda chief denies uniform scam

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—AUGUSTO SYJUCO, HEAD of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda), has denied corruption and bribery allegations over a P5-million education program in Iloilo, saying he wasn't taking his accuser seriously.

In a telephone interview with the Inquirer Thursday night, Syjuco also accused Manuel Mejaredo, who used Syjuco and Mayor Arsadio Gonzaga of Pavia town, of seeking revenge.

Syjuco said Mejaredo was angry at him after Mejaredo was fired as Syjuco's chief of staff years ago.

"I'm sorry to say this, but I cannot take [Mejaredo] seriously," Syjuco said.

Mejaredo on Wednesday filed criminal and administrative charges at the Office of the Ombudsman against Syjuco for alleged bribery and padding of a project that provided free school uniforms to elementary and high school students. The project was implemented in 2008 near the end of Syjuco's term as representative of Iloilo's second district.

Mejaredo alleged that the costs of school uniforms were padded by nearly P1 million. He also accused Syjuco of offering and giving a bribe to Mayor Gonzaga.

But Syjuco denied that there were irregularities. He said the Commission on Audit (COA) did not find any violations.

GMA trip to Zambo delays transfer of soldiers' bodies to Metro

By Jocelyn R. Uy and TJ Burgonio

THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO have been flown in three Manila-bound military planes yesterday so they could be returned to their mother units, but the military plane tasked to transport the bodies of some of the soldiers slain by the Abu Sayyaf remained empty in Villamor Air Base.

The bodies remained in Zamboanga City because of what military officials called "a change of plans"—President Macapagal-Arroyo had decided to fly to that southern city today to pay her respects and give the fallen soldiers military honors.

Grieving relatives who had been waiting at Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, for the remains of their loved ones, were instead flown to Zamboanga to set a ceremonial flight yesterday paid for by the Philippine Army.

Twenty-three soldiers were killed in three clashes with the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Tipo-tipo, Basilan, on Wednesday. The bandit group suffered at least 21 dead.

Still a success

Despite the heavy losses, the military claimed the operation was a success as government troops were able to capture a killing Abu Sayyaf training camp the bandits had been using to make bombs.

It was not immediately clear when the bodies would be flown to Manila.

"We were informed it has been postponed because the President is arriving in Zamboanga City tomorrow (today)," a military official told the reporters. The official asked not to be identified for lack of authority to speak on the matter.

Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr. said the AFP had been told that Mr. Arroyo planned to hold a command conference in Zamboanga.

Back and forth

The C-130 cargo plane that was to have picked up the bodies in Zamboanga took off from Villamor at around 9:45 a.m. yesterday for the given mission.

When it landed in Zamboanga six hours later, plans had been changed. It flew back to Villamor without the bodies for reasons yet unknown.

Later, the C-130 again flew to Zamboanga—this time carrying members of the Presidential Security Group who were to complete Mr. Arroyo's advance party.

The Presidential News Desk said it was Mr. Arroyo's personal decision to go to Zamboanga "out of concern for her men in the field" as commander-in-chief.

Prayers for the fallen

Besides presiding over a command conference in Zamboanga, and paying her respects to the slain soldiers, Mr. Arroyo will also visit the wounded.

"She will be getting a full update on briefing on the situation on the ground and ... will lead in the planning and decision-making that needs to be done to follow up on the successful operations that have been in the battlefield in the past seven encounters," Gary Olivar, presidential economic spokesperson, said in a briefing.

"Naturally, something like this saddens not just the President but all of us who are involved in the prosecution of this prolonged war in the South," Olivar said, referring to the high number of military fatalities.

Olivar opened the briefing with a statement asking for prayers for the slain soldiers and paying tribute to them.

Dead soldiers mutilated

From page A1

each draped with a Philippine flag, lay in town at the gymnasium of the Western Mindanao Command here.

The Tausug were only recently married. Rosalyn had just received certificate-of-live message.

The bandits, it turned out, had not reached her husband's head.

But they did hack him to the legs and he also had a gunshot wound in the body, Rosalyn said.

Last remembrance

Of all the possessions Sergeant Torres had with him when he went into battle that day, all that was left with Rosalyn was the bullets coming of his cellphone.

"They ang nanawag ako sila ni Jhey-Jhe (This is the only remembrance [Jheylle left]," Rosalyn said.

He sent his last message to his wife at around 5 a.m. on the day of his last battle. "He said he was going into an operation and he said goodbye (ang paalam po nya)," Rosalyn said.

'They are God-less'

She said the bandit who sent his message through her husband's phone "even called us pips (Bailey)."

"I told them they were God-less," Rosalyn said in tears.

"At least, he was brought home and his face present to his kind dumb wounds in the legs," she said.

Driven by poverty

The massacre at the gym included Levi and Cecilio Bonoc. They came all the way from Sibang, Bacolo Catabato, to weep for their son, Private First Class Eunice Jacinto Bonoc, 23, of the 67th Infantry Battle Company.

He was among those taken the coffins.

Bonoc's body was riddled with bullets. He also had back wounds in the lower thighs.

Bonoc said Eunice had joined the Marines three years ago because of poverty. "That was the reason he became a soldier," Cecilia Bonoc said.

They also endorsed her son's orders.

Pining for justice

Sgt. Reynaldo Tomijas, a former member of the Presidential Security Group, suffered a harsher fate. He found out over-by several, according to his elder brother Cecilio, from Zamboanga Sibugay.

Speaking in Filipino, Cecilio said: "He was also hit by a sniper shot to his head. What happened to my brother was awful."

"Labay ng mga nanlaban sa mga sundalo (All the bandits who died had dark wounds)," Cecilio said.

Another brother, Pablo, said Tomijas had long wanted to retire from the military service and go into business.

Cecilio said bitterly: "There should be genuine justice here.

The Presidents should issue a really strong order to finish off these rebels. They should be wiped out from this earth (Dapat ay maubos na sila sa mundo)."

Pablo said that before that ended happen, the government should be serious in its campaign against the Abu Sayyaf.

HEADS HONORED: Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro pays his respects during rites at the Western Mindanao Command headquarters in Zamboanga City. [illegible]

A PROCESSION of PNP military trucks carrying the flag-draped coffins of 23 fallen soldiers winds slowly inside the Western Mindanao Command headquarters in Zamboanga City on Friday. [illegible]

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'To the last breath'

Cecilio said he was proud of his brother and of the others soldiers because they stood their ground despite being overpowered.

"They were at a disadvantage because they were outnumbered but even if they were outarmed they really fought to their last breath," Cecilio said, crying in check his emotions.

He said his brother and the other slain Marines were not normally part of the assembling team but had been ordered to reinforce the MILF-still secretary-general Ameril Ombra Kato, Col. Romeo Brawner Jr. said.

HIGH: The Western Mindanao Command gym is turned into a huge wake area for soldiers of the Philippine Marines, Scout Rangers and Light Reaction Company. The casualties include junior officers Lt. Ja. Dhell Jon Evangelista of the Light Reaction Company and 2nd Lt. Chester Bavola of the 1st Scout Ranger Battalion. [illegible]

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MILF rebels pulled deadly ambush

From page A1

attack—which took place outside the Abu Sayyaf camp in Barangay Manglayan—even if they knew they were not the targets of the operation and that a suspension of military operations had been agreed upon between them and the military.

Brawner said the armed forces was out to file a formal protest with the Coordinating Committee on Cessation of Hostilities against the MILF's 104th base command for violating the ceasefire.

Mutual agreement

"We would like to state that this operation was in effect not violative with the [agreement] and we did this in order to reduce the number of collateral casualties," Brawner said in a separate talk with reporters at Camp Aguinaldo.

Upon the orders of Malacañang, the military had suspended combat operations against the MILF and placed its troops in Mindanao on an "active defense mode" since July 24 to pave the way for the resumption of stalled peace talks.

Two days after the government halted its operations, MILF chief Murad Ebrahim ordered the suspension of military actions (Dentai) in all areas where the MILF has fighters.

In Pelaindaguit's clashes, which raged until nightfall, the military said that from 50 to 60 Abu Sayyaf bandits were killed, but it had counted only 21 bodies.

Of the number, 18 of them were believed members of the MILF.

Naval blockade

A spokesperson for the MILF, Eid Kabalu, confirmed 18 MILF fighters were killed and accused the military of staggering the fight by entering into MILF territory without seeking permission.

The area denied by Brig. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, the Marines Command chief, who said the military had sent prior notice to the MILF.

In the wake of Wednesday's fighting, the military has ordered pursuit operations against the Abu Sayyaf and a "naval blockade" or "naval barrier patrol" by the navy surrounding Basilan to prevent the bandit group from escaping to other islands, Brawner said.

He said members of the group might try to escape to neighboring Sulu Island or even to Zamboanga City.

SOLDIERS carry one of 23 soldiers killed in fierce fighting in Basilan during rites at the Western Mindanao Command headquarters in Zamboanga City. [illegible]

Story continued on A2

Story spokesperson Lt. Col. Edgard Arevalo said at least three pursuit garrisons, three multipurpose attack security and another vessel had been sent to the area for the blockade.

Isolated case

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza Jr. said the involvement of some MILF fighters in the gun battle was an "isolated case" and would not in anyway affect the upcoming peace talks.

Manila is looking forward to the resumption of talks in Malaysia soon between the government panel, headed by Ambassador Rafael B. Seguis, and the MILF panel, led by Mohagher Iqbal.

During Wednesday's fighting, the Army's Prime Light Reaction Company swarmed various [illegible] weapons, a "movable number" of improvised explosive devices, anti bomb-making equipment and components from the Abu Sayyaf camp, the Army said.

Among the recovered items were four light machine guns, four M14 rifles, five RPD grenade launchers, two rocket-propelled grenades, five M16 rifles (two of them fitted with scopes), a "Baby Armalite" with an M203 grenade launcher, five Mioimi signal encoders-receivers and five cellular phones, Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Jeanelle Rongca Jr. said.

Need for talks questioned

In Baguio City, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon called for a "revaluation" of the government's position on the peace talks with the MILF.

Biazon, a former chief of staff of the Armed Forces, also wanted Malaysia, who had been acting as a broker, out of the negotiating table.

"In the resumption of the peace talks between the government and the MILF still necessary? Are we still going to pursue in the format followed in the past or should we reevaluate our position?" Biazon asked.

He said the government should also look into the impact of the hostilities.

If there is a resumption of peace talks, Biazon said Malaysia should no longer be a mediator.

"We have conflicts of interest with Malaysia," said Biazon, chair of the Senate committee on national defense and security. He said among those are the disputes on the ownership of Sabah and parts of the oil-rich Spratly Islands.

What went wrong?

Biazon said the government should also study what went wrong in Basilan.

"Why did this happen? Why are there more casualties in the government than the enemy?" he asked.

Biazon also said that investigation should be launched on the role of the MILF in the fighting.

"Is it just the Abu Sayyaf or the MILF or the two together?" he asked.

Elite troops of the Philippine National Police (PNP), such as those from the Special Action Force, the Regional Mobile Group and the Provincial Mobile Group, are backing the military in its pursuit of the Abu Sayyaf bandits.

"They are in strategic locations where they [can] deployed per request of the local executive from the military," PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Leocadio Espina said.

The PNP suffered one wounded in Pelaindaguit's fighting, PNP Director Leocadio of SAF. [illegible] reports from Wendy Grisola, Inquirer Northern Luzon and Mitz Quiroz-Cadiz in Manila

NEWS

ESTRADA: 91.1 percent sure he would run, according to son Jinggoy

Erap: Only the people will decide if I can run

By Ira Zarcaro and Michael Lim Ubac

FORMER PRESIDENT JOSEPH ESTRADA YESTERDAY SAID ONLY the "sovereign Filipino people" can decide whether or not he could run for president.

Estrada, who wants to run again if the opposition fails to unite behind a common candidate, said even the Supreme Court has given an opinion that the people remain as the "final arbiter" in any political question.

The former president issued the statement in response to Senate minority leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. who had urged Estrada to forget the presidency since he would be disqualified by the Supreme Court in the event that a question on his qualification is elevated to the high tribunal.

"Thank you for your unsolicited advice. But even the law states that in election cases, it is the sovereign will of the people that must prevail," Estrada said. "I would still like to believe in the independence and objectivity of the justices of the Supreme Court, who will be the final arbiter of this question."

Estrada said various legal luminaries including former Supreme Court Chief Justices had given opinions that he could run again.

He added that even the son of Pimentel, his supercoiler Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III, said the ban on reelection covers only presidents who have completed the six-year term.

Estrada was elected in January 2001, just two and a half years after he was elevated in May 1998.

Clarification

Pimentel yesterday clarified that he was not inviting Estrada to drop his presidential bid.

"I deny that I said outright that Erap shouldn't run. What I said was if he ran, he'd be challenged before the SC [Supreme Court] and considering the composition of the SC, he just might be disqualified," said Pimentel in a text message.

At a luncheon press conference the other day, the minority chief was asked if Estrada should run for president or play the role of kingmaker.

This was Pimentel's answer: "As of now there is no basis to challenge him... The moment Erap files his certificate of candidacy... then a justiciable question is created, which can be elevated to the Supreme Court. Considering the composition, configuration of the Supreme Court today... It's a possibility that he just might be disqualified."

He also touched on Estrada's reason for trying to reclaim the presidency, which was stressed from him during a rubdown backed up with a...

91 percent sure

"If Erap's destiny is to be vindicated by the people, I think getting elected is not the only way to do that. He'll being vindicated right now," Pimentel said. "When he goes around the nation he's the only candidate who is literally being mobbed by people all over. That to me is an indication of the kind of resident adulation that Erap enjoys."

Senate president pro tempore Jinggoy Estrada reiterating confirmed that his father was 91.1 percent sure that he would give the presidency another shot in 2010.

"If the opposition candidates will not unite, he will surely run," the younger Estrada revealed, reacting to Pimentel who said that uniting the opposition was impossible as Senate Manny Villar and Mar Roxas would never back out of the presidential race.

The senator also said the remaining one percent blocking his father from running was a legal impediment, referring to the Constitutional ban on former presidents seeking reelection.

The Supreme Court is expected to rule on the issue once Estrada files his certificate of candidacy in November.

"He's going to make an important announcement in September," the senator said, adding that his father would win the race even when joined against other opposition presidential bets.

Jinggoy for VP?

The younger Estrada denied that he would run in his father's winning team.

"I will run for reelection," he said, adding that his father, despite his age, could still run the country as President.

"He's stronger than any other presidential candidates for that matter. He has already learned from his mistakes. He wants to continue his projects programs that were discontinued by the Arroyo government," the senator said.

He said the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey boosted his father's chances of winning in the 2010 presidential race.

"But at this point, you can never tell. Unlike in 1998 when he won the minority vote. But despite the accusations thrown his way, he still remains popular," the senator said.

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Editor Alejandro S. Lllanday

Release me now, Gonzalez asks RTC

By Tina G. Santos

BUSINESSMAN LUISITO "LOUIE" Gonzalez has asked the court to immediately release him from detention, citing the Supreme Court ruling upholding the dismissal of the murder charge filed against him on the death of his stepbrother, Federico Delgado, in March 2007.

Through his lawyers, Gonzalez filed on Aug. 11 a "very urgent motion for the immediate release of the accused" at the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 32, where the case remains pending.

He asked Judge Thelma Bunyi-Medina to issue an order directing that he and his driver, Antonio Buenaflor, be immediately released from detention and custody of the authorities of the National Bureau of Investigation and Manila City Jail, respectively.

"With the declaration by the Supreme Court that the amended decision is final and executory, it is clear that this court has lost its jurisdiction over the case and has no legal standing to seek the reversal of the appellate court decision.

It added that the Solicitor General's motion for a period of 30 days within which to submit a position paper on the supervening period before this court rendered the assailed decision of the Court of Appeals final and executory with respect to the criminal aspect of the case.

Delgado's heirs and Bruce earlier sought the reversal of the appellate court's September 2008 decision that dismissed the charges against Gonzalez and Buenaflor.

The two were accused of stabbing Delgado in his apartment in Malate, Manila, on March 10, 2007. Bruce, who claimed that the two men looked her inside a closet from which she managed to escape, later identified them as the ones responsible for the victim's death.

Gonzalez is a grandson of former Forestry Undersecretary Epifanio Quirino and the ex-husband of singer Kuh Ledesma.

Based on the high court's records, the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) did not appeal the appellate court's decision dismissing the charges against the two men.

Shuttle bus causes 6-vehicle smashup

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A SPEEDING SHUTTLE BUS TRIGGERED A six-vehicle smashup on Edsa early yesterday morning, snagging traffic at the northbound stretch for nearly six hours.

PO3 Jeanette Romenigo of the Quezon City Police Traffic Enforcement Group said a taxi driver, Julius Javier Lacsamana, sustained a minor cut to his right eyebrow.

Investigators discovered that the shuttle bus driven by Michael Sena was cruising the northbound lane at around 6 a.m. when it

SHUTTLE A10

Intruder in banker's QC house shot dead by aide

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A MAN WHO ALLEGEDLY TRIED to break into the house of banker Lolo Payad to rob upscale subdivisions in Quezon City was shot dead by a driver-bodyguard, police said yesterday.

PO3 Florencio Sandoval of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit, officers on case, said the incident took place at around 8:15 p.m. Thursday at Payad's house in Ayala Heights, Old Balara, Quezon City.

Payad's wife, Liduvina, told police that a man identified as Nelson Umangay, 32, in a statement identified the shooter as Nelson Umangay.

"Nagsisigaw po ng aking asawang driver (Umangay) ang isang lalaki na sa aming palagay ay nang-mugmog daw siya bilang isa sa mga holdaper," Liduvina told police.

Police said the suspect, who is still unidentified, bore a tattoo "guardian" on his right arm.

Liduvina said the intruder died on the spot.

The driver narrated he and Umangay were on their quarters when one of the maids informed them of an unidentified man in the backyard.

Liduvina said Umangay took his gun and chased the intruder who allegedly tried to run away.

For his part, Liduvina said he ran to seek help from the security guard at the front gate of the subdivision.

Liduvina said that when he and the subdivision security guard were going to the house, they heard a single gunshot.

"When we got there, we saw the suspect sprawled on the grounds," the driver said.

FORMER beauty queen Rochelle Barrameda stands in front of the Department of Justice building Friday after a courtside fighting controversy calling for justice for her daughter, Ruby Ven. Barrameda (inset), who would have been 20 years old today

Oops, no go for Rama's slander suit vs TV exec

By John H. Aurelio

THE QUEZON CITY PROSECUTORS office has junked a grave slander complaint filed by senior manager Ayumbelle Rama against GMA 7 bimanok executive Wilma Galvante.

In a 10-page resolution dated July 29, assistant city prosecutor Reynaldo Turralba said there was no probable cause against Galvante in her statements during a talk with one of Rama's friends over text handling or derogatory.

The grave slander complaint stemmed from an earlier tiff between Galvante and Rama over the issue of the content of Barbie's word, *Ikaw Ako*.

Galvante, GMA 7's vice president for entertainment, has previously filed a P5 million civil complaint for damages and a petition for injunction against Rama earlier at Quezon City court.

In her complaint, Rama alleged that Galvante and Dengcoy things about her during Galvante's conversation with actor JC de Vera inside Galvante's office on Oct. 16, 2008.

Rama said in her affidavit Galvante insulted her when the TV executive gave [illegible] as the reason that "she was incompetent as a manager."

In her defense, Galvante said Rama's complaint was unfounded and baseless.

In his resolution, Turralba said that Galvante's statements to De Vera, where taken to their entire context, has "nothing derogatory that would tend to undermine the competence of the complainant in the eyes of her talent."

Marikina nutrition program cited anew

By DJ Yap

THE CITY OF MARIKINA WAS recognized as the fourth province, city or municipality in the country for "Pabasa sa Nutrisyon" program to combat malnutrition, officials said Friday.

The city received a Hall of Fame award from the Philippine Association of Nutrition, Inc. (PAN), which conferred the recognition to Mayor Marides Fernando in an awarding ceremony recently, officials said.

The awarding coincided with PAN's 42nd annual convention at Legenda Hotel in Subic, Zambales.

"Pabasa sa Nutrisyon" is a learning tool designed to help combat malnutrition in the Philippines through the participation of barangay workers and the support of local government executives, program managers, and local nutrition workers.

In a statement, Fernando said the award will further spur the local government to fortify its nutrition programs.

"We also recognize the importance of good nutrition in promoting long-term health and wellness. This concept underlies our nutrition initiatives, especially those that aim to introduce children to a range of healthy food choices and eventually to their healthy eating habits," Fernando added.

Since 2005, CHO's Nutrition Section has implemented Pabasa sa Nutrisyon through seminars, reading sessions, cooking demonstrations, and educational games for mothers.

In a separate campaign against malnutrition, city officials recently inaugurated a "Nestogen" bakery at Nature Elementary School in Tumana day Elementary School in line with the "Nestogen sa Eskwelahan" project of the Nutrition Center of the Philippines.

The project aims to establish bakeries at school campuses that produce iron- and Vitamin A-fortified "pandesal" bread.

MetroBriefs

Bomb ingredients recovered

ABOUT 300 kilos of ammonium nitrate was recovered by police along Pit Senyor in Caloocan City yesterday. The bomb ingredients found can believed to be enough of the ones used in the series of explosions that rocked the cities of Caloocan and Valenzuela two days, said Senior Supt. Jude Sentino, Caloocan police chief. Sentino said police initially seized two boxes and four plastic bags left lying at the corner of 7th Avenue and E. Santiago Street at around 11:20 a.m. Insp. Reynaldo Nuñez, chief of the mobile patrol group, said the amount he was found was considerable and could inflict a big damage if made into a bomb. *Beverly T. Rafalsky*

New site for Valenzuela school

THE CITY government of Valenzuela is negotiating to buy a 4,500-square-meter lot to house the newly-independent Adriano Bato Memorial High School in Barangay Marulas. Through the second signing of Republic Act No. 9860, the old Antonio Delos Reyes of the Valenzuela National High School (VNHS) was given autonomy to operate as a separate national high school and will now be called Adriano Bato Memorial High School (ABMHS). To prepare for the additional high school, the city government is now eyeing a new property that would serve as its location. The legislation, which was initiated by Valenzuela City First District Rep. Rex Gatchalian, pushed for the conversion of the VNHS Annex into an independent high school so it could acquire its own independent allotment from the national fund, thus providing additional facilities for its growing number of students. *Beverly T. Rafalsky*

Cinemanila Int'l Film Fest set

MAYOR Fidel Ty said on Friday that the 2009 Cinemanila International Film Festival plays a major role in promoting arts and culture in the city as it would expose the residents to world-class international and local movies. In a statement, the city government said international celebrities and critically-acclaimed films are expected to grace the film festival at Fort Bonifacio's Global City on Oct. 15-25. "An impressive line-up of international and local films, and a roster of international personalities including renowned cinematographer and director Pilad Bombarier (Tsao Dream 'Raging Bull'), and 'I' Is Maria Tambien' star Diego Luna are expected to attend the film fest," the statement said. Brillante Mendoza, who won best director award at Cannes, will head this year's jury. *Rita Catherine Calleja*

Fish vendor kills self

A FISH vendor allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself using a nylon cord on Thursday night inside his house in Las Piñas City, police said. The suicide, identified as Ildefonso Cortez, 40, had been dead for several hours when found. A neighbor told police that Cortez and his wife had been separated for almost a year which might have triggered the latter's depression. *Rita Catherine Calleja*

AFP should come up with better strategies

ON TARGET

By Jaime Laya

SOMEBODY MUST A PICture of Molly Feldkoler, President Gloria's personal secretary, to Bobby Ray's trunkboxer in Washington.

The undercover management allegedly confirmed she was the lady who paid the bill for the $121,000-dinner of the President's party, and not Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez.

Feldkoler reportedly also paid the bill at *Le Cirque* in New York for that $20,000 dinner.

If the President could lie about these dinners, how many more and bigger lies did she tell the people?

* * *

Had the President just apologized for the expensive dinners, people would have understood since she's entitled to some luxuries as head of state.

And the issue would have died a natural death.

But the people can't understand why she would lie to them, why she would not compassionate for expenses.

It's a reflection of a character flaw which citizens don't expect of their President.

* * *

Ronnie Macalintal, the President's election lawyer, hit back at media for questioning the propriety of the $20,000 dinner by raising a morality issue against media outfits.

He said media owners were interested in accommodating political ads violating the law against political campaigning.

Macalintal forgot that some of those ads have "immoral ads" with media outlets are members of GMA's Cabinet and her political allies.

Since he's an election lawyer who doesn't see the charges against the owners of those political ads?

* * *

Why doesn't Macalintal stick to the issue of the propriety of the President splurging $20,000 for a dinner in New York while many people back home are hungry?

Why bring up the subject of indiscretion when it's irrelevant to the discussion?

The President and her husband's misfortune is having third-rate lawyers to defend them.

If they retain the same lawyers when they're charged with plunder and other crimes after GMA's term in 2010, they will surely be convicted.

* * *

Former Supreme Court Justice Ruben T. Reyes has been harassed by his former peers from practicing law indefinitely for leaking an unpromulgated decision.

That is tantamount to disbarment and he deserves it.

Now that the Judicial and Bar Council should be very meticulous in recommending candidates to the high court.

Where Reyes came from before he became Supreme Court magistrate—the Court of Appeals—what he did a document to the appellate court.

Most decisions and orders from the Court of Appeals are allegedly issued in favor of litigants who enrich their appointees.

Reyes was a famous presiding justice at the Court of Appeals.

* * *

The 18th Aquyal area outshines the fighting prowess of our elite soldiers—the Marines and Army Rangers—if the battle are normal hardships in an insurrection.

Twenty-three Marines and Rangers were killed or ambushed 21 on the 18th Aquyal clash during the battle fought from sunrise to sundown.

The Armed Forces should come up with new and better strategies for guerrilla warfare.

Europe comes roaring back: Free fall ending?

FRANKFURT, GERMANY—THE European economy bounced back with unexpected strength in the second quarter, buoying hopes that a worldwide recession was clawing to a close.

The sharp improvement from the first quarter underscored just how far Europe still trailed the global economy had some since a harrowing free fall in late 2008. Underlying the strong reading were solid performances in France and Germany, each of whose economies grew slightly in the second quarter, according to government data released on Thursday.

The economy of the 27-country European Union shrank 0.2 percent in the three months ended June 30, for an annual rate of roughly 1.2 percent. The 16 countries that use the euro registered a 0.1 percent decline for the second quarter, or an annual rate of roughly 0.4 percent.

Despite being in negative territory, the European data looked much better than in the first quarter of this year, when both the European Union and the euro zone contracted 2.3 percent from the last three months of 2008.

The significant easing of the recession put Europe roughly on a par with the United States, where the economy shrank at an annual pace of one percent during the second quarter. Economists said Europe got some help from government programs, like provisions being paid to scrap old cars for new ones—their term "cash for clunkers" program—as well as greater demand for exports in China.

Europe still faces the possibility that its recovery could slow or even stall in early 2010 because of lagging efforts to repair its banking system and sharply rising unemployment. Nonetheless, the uneven picture in Europe, particularly in Germany and France, has given the region a leg up sooner than most economists expected.

Because of its sharply different recipe for combating the recession, Europe is likely to have slower growth than the United States by 2010, economists predict.

By next year, the bloc's share of an $800-billion spending program in the United States will kick in, dwarfing the outlays in Europe, which ranked such approaches out of fear of becoming heavily mired in debt. About $350 billion in tax rebates gave the United States a boost toward recovery in the last few months.

"We will really see the difference in economies next year," said Thomas Mayer, the chief European economist for Deutsche Bank. "That will be when the US becomes back more quickly than Europe. AFP

Jackson doc said to have bought propofol

LAS VEGAS—THE POWERFUL anesthetic that investigators believe killed Michael Jackson came from a Nevada pharmacy that was raided this week, a law enforcement official said. The Associated Press on Thursday.

Dr. Conrad Murray bought the anesthetic propofol from Applied Pharmacy Services on May 12 and administered doses from that purchase to Jackson in the hours before his June 25 death, the official said.

Authorities are focused on propofol as a central element in Jackson's death at age 50. The drug is usually administered by anesthesia professionals in medical settings to render patients unconscious for medical procedures. But Jackson had been using it in his home.

Drug Enforcement Administration agents and police served a search warrant on Tuesday and took evidence showing Murray legally bought the propofol from the manufacturer, said the official, who requested anonymity because the investigation is ongoing.

The warrant has not yet been unsealed for the drug, made by two different manufacturers, and both were found in Jackson's rented Beverly Hills mansion after his death, the official said.

Investigators have not determined if Jackson had been given shots from one or both batches of the drug.

Murray told investigators he gave Jackson the drug as a sleep aid, along with multiple sedatives, in the hours before Jackson died, the official said. Investigators think Murray left the room where Jackson was sleeping for a few minutes to make phone calls and returned to find the pop icon not breathing.

While investigators believe propofol was the principle factor in Jackson's death, they have not ruled out the possibility that other medications played a role. AP

FAMILY PORTRAIT
Mandara, a Western Lowland Gorilla, holds her 7-month-old baby Kibibi on Aug. 13 in their habitat at the Smithsonian's National Zoo in Washington, DC. Kibibi is now reaching solid food, her new favorite being cherry tomatoes. AFP

Amid protests, China backs down over Internet filter plan

BEIJING—A TOP BEIJING OFFICIAL said on Thursday that a controversial Internet filter software was optional for all users after plans to install it on computers sold in China triggered a storm of protests.

"After you install the software, you can use it or you can decide not to use it," said Li Yizhong, minister of industry and information technology.

"When you buy a computer, a floppy disk or CD (with the software) is given out, and the right to choose resides with the parent, with society," he told reporters in Beijing.

News emerging in June that all computer makers had been ordered to install the software caused outcry in China and abroad, with critics accusing the government of trying to increase controls over the Internet.

Beijing consistently countered that the filter was designed to shelter youngsters from pornography and violence, and to give parents control over what their children view online.

But China abruptly postponed the plan on the eve of July 1, when it had planned to implement the order.

Li said China would not force all computer makers to preinstall the software—called Green Dam Youth Escort—on the machines.

He acknowledged the plan had not been explained well enough, and said China would solicit the public's views over the software.

But he said China would continue to load it in public places such as schools and Internet cafes.

A US corporate trade association welcomed the Chinese move.

"Internet filtering is a prior restraint on free speech and does restrain or slow the flow of ideas inhibit everything from democracy to economic development," said Ed Black, president and chief executive of the Computer and Communications Industry Association.

"China's decision to block enforcement of Green Dam for PCs boosts what would have been a logjam in the free flow of information," he said in a statement. "It's a wise move and a win for free speech, access to information and trade." AFP

21 killed in Iraq suicide attacks

MOSUL, IRAQ—AT LEAST 21 PEOPLE, most of them members of the ancient Yazidi religious sect, were killed when two suicide bombers blew themselves up on Thursday in separate raids in northern Iraq, officials said.

At least 32 people were also wounded when the bombers detonated suicide belts packed with explosives in the cab in the Sinjar neighborhood of Sinjar town.

"We received 21 corpses of different ages and two heads belonging to the suicide bombers," the director of the Sinjar hospital, Khidr Shaban, said.

"We received 32 injured, 10 of them in critical condition," he said.

Ambulance driver Ammen Hasebnel said, "After the explosion, we went quickly to the site, which was very close to the hospital. When we got there we saw many corpses, body parts and wounded everywhere.

"We saw burning bodies and we loaded the victims with help from people. Three victims died on the way to the hospital."

Sinjar, northwest of the insurgent stronghold of Mosul in northern Nineveh province, is predominantly populated by Yazidis, as well as by Arabs and Muslim Kurds.

Local authorities slapped down a curfew on all vehicles in the town in the wake of the attack.

The attack is the deadliest since Monday when 51 people were killed across Iraq, including 28 members of the ruling Shabak sect cut down when two truck bombs detonated in the village of Khazenah outside of Mosul.

In August 2007, more than 500 Yazidis were slaughtered when four suicide truck bombs targeted two northern Iraqi villages in the deadliest attack since the US-led invasion of 2003. AFP

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Australian court allows quadriplegic right to die

PERTH, AUSTRALIA—AN AUSTRALIAN court on Friday ruled that a quadriplegic man who has begged to be allowed to die has the right to refuse treatment to stop feeding tube.

In a landmark decision, Western Australia's chief Judge Wayne Martin said the Bridgewater Care Group would not be criminally responsible if it stopped feeding and hydrating severely paralyzed Christian Rouches, 49.

Martin said Rouches had the right to choose his own treatment, and that food and water "should not be administered against his wishes."

The ruling sets a legal precedent in Australia, where assisting someone to take their own life is a crime punishable by life in prison in some states.

The judge said Rouches was not terminally ill or dying and had the mental capacity to make an informed decision about stopping his treatment.

Martin ordered that medical staff fully explain to Rouches the consequences of ceasing nutrition and hydration through a tube into his stomach.

In a statement read to the court Friday, the former stockbroker and ratchet adventurer said he was unable to undertake the most basic of human functions.

"I am unable to blow my nose," he said. "I am unable to wipe the water from my eyes."

He made a public plea last week to be allowed to end his suffering, which he described as a "living hell."

"I'm Christian Rouches and I'd like to die. I am a prisoner in my own body. I can't move," he told reporters.

"I have no fear of death...just pain. I only fear pain."

Frontier developed spastic quadriplegia after separate accidents in which he fell 20 meters from a building and was then hit by a car while riding his bicycle.

"I believe (quadriplegics) should be allowed to exercise their free, dom of choice but my choice is to die," he said.

"I can't wipe my own bottom. I've had opportunities every three days to initiate me to open my bowels and it's a very painful process that can take me at eight hours," he added.

Brightwater, the group that runs the nursing home where Rouches lives, sought a court ruling on whether wanting to feed him would place it in breach of its duty of care, and said it held no position on his wish to die. AFP

Millions of salmon fail to show up

OTTAWA—MILLIONS OF SALMON expected to reach a Canadian river on the annual "summer run" are nowhere to be seen, leaving the fishing industry there faced with devastation, officials said on Thursday.

The Canadian government's Department of Fisheries and Oceans projected that between six and 18 million sockeye salmon would return to the Fraser river this month.

But the official count for the run—by far the largest of four salmon migrations that see millions of fish return to Canada's lakes and rivers from the Pacific each year from June to late August—is now just 600,000.

Where the others were remains a mystery.

Russell Robertson, quoted by the daily Globe and Mail, described the situation as "shocking," a "disaster, plus" and a "crisis," while public broadcaster CBC said 2009 could end up being the worst year ever for the industry.

A record number of salmon canoes were born in the Fraser in 2005 and migrated to the ocean. Nature decides that most of them should have returned by now to spawn. AFP

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UN Council opts not to condemn Suu Kyi verdict

UNITED NATIONS—THE UN Security Council on Thursday opted not to condemn the extended detention of Burma's (Myanmar) democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi but unanimously issued a fresh call to the military regime to free all political prisoners.

After two days of closed-door bargaining, the 15-member body could only agree on a watered-down statement expressing "serious concern at the conviction and sentencing of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and its political impact" and reiterating "the importance of the release of all political prisoners."

Britain's UN Ambassador John Sawers, the council chair this month, described the watered-down statement as "an important expression of serious concern about the outcome" of the hearings.

A court in Rangoon's (Yangon) notorious Insein Prison on Tuesday sentenced Suu Kyi to three years' imprisonment and hard labor for breaching the terms of her house arrest following an incident in which a US man swam to her lakeside residence in May.

Than Shwe, head of the ruling junta, announced the sentence to 19 months under house arrest but the end and the verdict have created international outrage.

"I think we all know that different members of the Security Council have different views on the detention there and that the strong views in various Western capitals are not entirely shared in countries elsewhere," Sawers noted on he sought to explain why an initial US draft was watered down.

The toughest US draft which would have condemned Suu Kyi's conviction was opposition from China, a key ally of Burma, as well as from Russia, Vietnam and Libya.

The four countries invoked the principle of noninterference in the domestic affairs of a UN member state.

The text approved on Thursday noted the decision by the Burma government to subject Suu Kyi's sentence and urged the military regime "to take further measures to create the necessary conditions for a genuine dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all concerned parties and ethnic groups in order to achieve an inclusive national reconciliation."

Aung San Suu Kyi in Jan. 30, 2008 photo. AFP

It also affirmed the council's "commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Burma" and reiterated that "the future of Burma lies in the hands of all its people."

Sunday, the council's 15 ambassadors adjourned formal, closed-door consultations without agreement on a condemnation of Suu Kyi's extended detention.

Instead, the council member China urged the international community to "fully respect Burma's judicial sovereignty."

In a related development, the European Union on Thursday broadened its sanctions against Burma in the wake of the Suu Kyi trial.

Brussels imposed a visa ban and asset freeze on members of the judiciary and in what it called "targeted measures," the 27-EU nations widened the bloc's existing assets freeze to cover businesses "owned and controlled by members of the regime" and their associates.

Suu Kyi has been confined for 14 of the past 20 years, ever since the military regime refused to recognize her National League for Democracy's landslide victory in the last elections held in 1990.

Unless she qualifies for an amnesty, the 64-year-old opposition leader and Nobel peace laureate will not be able to contest elections planned for next year. AFP

Cheers as BancNet Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Armando Tetangco leads the toast to BancNet. With him are (from left) BancNet president Francisco Caparros, Jr., BSP Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla, Bankers Association of the Philippines and BPI president Aurelio Montinola III, BancNet chairman Ricardo Chua and director Dennis Sulit

BSP Governor Toasts BancNet

Bangko Sentral ng Philipinas (BSP) Governor Armando Tetangco was the guest of honor at BancNet's celebration of a banner year as it marked its 10th Anniversary recently.

Governor Tetangco offered a toast for the celebratory cocktail reception during the event held at the ballroom of Intercontinental Hotel in Makati. He was joined by BSP Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla and Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP) president Aurelio Montinola III.

In his opening remarks, BancNet president Francisco Caparros, Jr. announced new members of the consortium. A record number of new members joined BancNet during its 10th year, bringing the total membership to 54, including two affiliate networks. The new members are led by the Philippine National Bank (PNB) which moved from another consortium last June. During the year, BancNet also recorded its highest transaction volume which declined compared to the previous year.

Board Chairman Ricardo Chua, on the other hand, stressed BancNet's commitment to continue exploring and introducing electronic banking innovations in order "to reach out to more customers and cater to more types of day-to-day transactions for the ordinary man. The financial infrastructure will continue to be a lifeblood connecting business and people", he said.

Editor Tobbyric S. Melendres • Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

SPORTS

GABE Norwood leaps high to block Jordan's Zaid Abbas in Friday's match. Mick Pennisi and Korky Raymundo cross in to provide help.

Jordan shoots down RP's Fiba World bid

Gritty Filipinos miss Top 3 after 11-point loss

By Marong R. Castillo

TIANJIN, CHINA—A NEVER-SAY-DIE Powerade-Pilipinas crew reached the end of the road in its bid to crash the World Championship next year, bowing to rock-solid Jordan, 81-70, Friday in a fiercely fought Fiba Asia quarterfinal contest at the Tianjin Gymnasium here.

Given very little chance of posting an upset, the Filipinos stayed with the Jordanians the whole game, even getting as close as five points with six minutes left in the fourth before falling short against an opponent that beat them silly the last time out.

"We leave right from the start that we were the terrible underdogs," said Philippine coach Ong Guiao, whose squad lost by 31 points to the Jordanians in the Jones Cup three weeks ago.

"We tried to keep the game as close as possible and maybe get the chance to take it in the end.

"We still look at it (the loss) in a positive way because we feel that we are still improving. But we are disappointed because we felt that this was our best chance to get to the Final Four."

The Philippines, assured of at least an eighth-place finish with the loss, will meet hostile Qatar as way on mark of finishing fifth in the consolation round.

Defending champion Iran broke away in the fourth quarter to top the Qataris, 73-63, in the day's second game.

Iran advanced opposite the Jordanians, although the reigning Fiba Asia champions will be at a slight disadvantage after losing playmaker Mahdi Kamrany, who took a very nasty tumble while going for a layup at the end of the third period.

The wily guard had to be carried off the floor by his teammates and laid on the sidelines for the remainder of the game while being attended to by team trainers.

Jordan actually beat the Philippines to its own game in the first half by outscoring almost at will from the outside. Big forward Ayman Main hit all five of his triples in the first two periods to finish with 20 before fouling out in the middle of the fourth.

And when the Filipinos, who trailed by as many as 15, 67-52, at the end of the third, came as within 68-63 after a Junkaraney layup by Cyrus Baguio with 6:06 to go, the Jordanians scored seven consecutive points to rebuild a 75-63 lead going into the final 3:24.

Raderius Wright, Jordan's naturalized

PHILIPPINES A-28

Stags sew up sweep, down dour Knights

By Cobolff Tapas

ROOKIE RONALDO PASCUAL POURED the right those last shots for San Sebastian late yesterday, boosting the Stags past the Letran Knights, 77-74, to complete a five-wound sweep of the NCAA tournament at the FilOil Flying V Arena in San Juan.

With chief gunner Jimbo Aquino hobbled by leg, Pascual, a transferee from Adamson, fired 12 of his season-best 17 points in the second half to help the Stags overhaul a 10-game deficit and score their ninth straight win, the longest streak in the league since 2006.

"It feels great to sweep the eliminations round," San Sebastian coach Ato Agoncillo said in Filipino. "But we can't afford to relax because all of the teams are out to beat us in the second round."

Another sweep in the second round will send the Stags overright to the best-of-three finals, while the second to fourth-seeded squads will clash in the stepladder semifinals to determine the other finalist.

"We're not thinking of the title yet," Agoncillo said. "We just want to reach the Finals first."

Stellar, Arellano slipped Mapua, 95-75, to draw out the five-way tussle with three outright victories and a 9-4 record, good for a share of fourth with Letran.

Leonard Asequilla, the slimmest player in the league at 5-foot-1, made a steal off Jayson Basinal in the dying seconds to preserve the Chiefs' lead, before Gio Gimarino, who finished with 14 points, and the game by splitting his free throws with 5.5 ticks left.

"I told my players that our goal is to make it to the Final Four and we need to start by getting this win. I'm glad they responded to the challenge," said Arellano U coach Jerdie Abbas.

The Stags turned a 30-49 deficit into a 57-51 lead late in the third period, thanks to a 14-3 run fueled by Aquino, who scored eight of his season-best 21 points during that stretch before sitting the bench for most of the final period on fouls.

Then, Pascual sealed the Stags' last home in the third period and second their five-game streak in the fourth to keep the Knights at bay, 85-80.

"We were overeager on the first half but we made the necessary adjustments and ended closer to the third quarter," said Agoncillo. "Letran clinched the scope of the game, but we got our game back when we executed our stepping defense."

Ian Sangalang's putback off Gilbert Bulawan's miss with 53 seconds left made it 77-74 for the Stags.

Letran had four chances to send the game to overtime after Bombay Raymundo missed two free throws but RJ Jazul and Kevin Alas missed potential game-tying triples inside the final 18 seconds.

In Juniors' play, Jiovlen Tampos and Jacher Dajo scrambled for 10 points while Glenn Rhoderick had 16 and 16 rebounds as Letran upended San Sebastian, 87-70, for 6-zero game sweep of the 1st round.

Arellano crushed Mapua, 100-86, to improve to 5-6.

The game scores:

First game:

ARELLANO (78)—Obiok 20, Cabuay 7, Ilustre 2, Gimarino 14, Abante 10, Asequilla 5, Jazul 3, Alvarez 2, Sangalang 12, Bulawan 2, Rodriguez 0, Tampoy 0, Villanueva 0

LETRAN (74)—Alas 10, Cabuay 7, Basinal 17, Aquino 21, Raymundo 12, Rabanal 0, Ramos 0, Pascual 12, Mendoza 0, Ramos 0, Tumbaga 0

QUARTER SCORES: 19

Hot Tamaraws out to extend streak, tackle Tigers

By Jasmine Vi. Payo

THE EASTERN TRIES TO EXTEND THE season's longest streak when it faces dangerous University of Santo Tomas in the UAAP men's basketball tournament today at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Tamaraws go for a seventh straight victory in the 4 p.m. duel with the Tigers and a tie for top spot with the defending champion Ateneo Blue Eagles.

University of the Philippines and Ateneo all Universities single-setter in 2 p.m.

The Tamaraws will miss the services of veterans Bal Cervantes, who will serve a one-game suspension after the 6-foot-5 shotman figured in an altercation with University of the East Warriors' Nat Llagas last week.

But the Tamaraws still harvest a formidable frontline led by Aldrech Ramos, the only player in the league boasting of a double-double average of 11.4 points and 10.9 rebounds.

"Going into the second round, we know that all the other teams want to beat us so our game must be one step higher," said FEU coach Glenn Capacio.

"I always preach team play," added Capacio. "And if we play good defense, we always have a strong chance of winning."

Top MVP contender

The Tamaraws won a 98-83 victory over the Tigers in the first round where they held Dylan Gladieu, the top contender for the Most Valuable Player award, to a personal low of 18 points.

"We must have team effort," said Gladieu. "We have no big man in our team. But Jervi [Teng] has been showing a lot of heart and will to win and (Ronnie) Matias has been backing me up every time I'm having a hard time."

Matias, who led the Tigers to a third-lane 4-3 record, averaged a league-best 19.6 points on top of 7.1 rebounds and 2.4 assists in the first round.

Matias also ranked second overall in scoring at 17 points per game, while Teng, the 6-foot-2 son of former pro Alvin, managed 12.9 points and 3.9 boards.

The Bulldogs, meanwhile, capped their first-round campaign with a 76-70 triumph over Adamson on climb to 2-3.

Water polo squad seeks SEA Games breakthrough

By Mhar Anthony Reyes

A CHANCE AT REDEMPTION.

That's the mission of the Philippine water polo team which has undergone a major buildup in a bid to finally topple long-time champion Singapore in the Lion Southeast Asian Games in December.

Dale Evangelista, one of the squad's only six holdovers for the biennial SEA Games, yesterday said they have added fresh talents to the team which has been undergoing a rigorous training here and overseas.

The Filipinos finished second to Singapore in the last two SEA Games, including the 2005 edition held in front of their countrymen at the Rizal Aquatics Center in Los Baños, Laguna.

"Our team this year is a combination of youth and experience in the hope of bringing home the elusive gold medal," Evangelista said in yesterday's Group Go Ramayan weekly session on Radio Veera, Manila.

Among the new faces in the team are Jasper Ong, Jeanniver Alberto and Team Godmaker of University of the Philippines, Eliel Evangelista of San Sebastian College, Lanzliver Garcilao of Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Jeriemiller Dela Cruz of Mapua and Danny Alcantara from Davao.

Aside from Evangelista, the other veterans are Tani Gomez, Sherwin Dela Paz, Alonzo Lacson, Pocholo Manuel and Jeremy Alcantara.

"We have a better team now, because of the young players," said Evangelista. "The hope things will be different in the coming Games. We are tired of bringing home other medals."

Evangelista and coach Rey Galang said that Singapore has also beefed up its roster, even importing naturalized players from China.

The Philippines hopes to sharpen its skills in the Singapore Open on Sept. 4 to 10 where powerhouse nations like Australia and New Zealand are expected to see action.

The country has been doing well internationally, flashing on the podium in the non-rollers Championships and the Asia Pacific Championships.

Jordan shuts door on RP

CYRUS Bagtas (left) drives past Jordan's Osama Daghles as Nick Pennisi sets up a pick. —

Footage A21

point guard, exploded for 15 points in the final two quarters, including a keyshot jumper with 1.38 to go which put the Philippines into a 70-67 lead.

It was all over but the shouting after Wright added another free throw off a Gabe Norwood foul for a 11-point lead heading into the final 61 seconds.

"We played against a very good team," Jordan coach Mario Pelaez said. "This is definitely a better Philippine national team than the one we played two years ago. It's not easy playing a team like the Philippines."

The Andamans made the Final Four of this year's summers for the first time while conquering the Philippines in a very important match for the second time in as many Wha Asia tournaments.

In the Yokohama Japan, edition in 2007—which served as qualifier for the 2008 Olympics....Jordan scored an 69-55 victory in an elimination-round encounter that sent the Filipinos to the classification stage where they eventually finished ninth.

Norwood went on to topscore for the Philippines with 17 points off the bench with Jared Dillinger and Willie Miller contributing 10 apiece.

Team Philippines connected on 12-of-33 triple tries but was terrible from the charity stripe, missing seven of 19 shots which could have gone a long way against a team like Jordan.

"You don't get wins like these and expect to win against a top-caliber team like Jordan," Dalano said.

The Philippines also got trampled off the boards, 49-38 with, inevitably, James Yap grabbing the most number of boards for the Filipinos with seven.

Yap, the deadliest three-point shooter in the Philippine squad, had no hands as once-strong defenses all game that didn't give him too many looks at the basket.

He made just two of his eight triple attempts and finished with just six points.

The scores

JORDAN 81—Wright 17, Ahlin 15, Abbas 13, Shishkoski 9, Dillon 8, Daghles 8, Alsmadi 6, Al-Hosni 4, Hattar 1, Awaga 0, Alwaqfeh 0, Abbas 0.

PHILIPPINES 70 (PIMAG)—Norwood 17, Dillinger 12, Miller 10, Pennisi 9, Bagtas 8, Jazmen 7, Yap 6, Raymundo 4, Baua 2, Sotelo/Ismael 0, Aguilar 0, Santos 0.

Quarters: 25-19, 46-38, 59-52, 81-70.

Steady Pucay joins tie for 6th in Thailand

SAMUI, THAILAND— JAMES PUCAY SHOT another 3-under par 68 and was poised somewhere for a top-10 Asian Tour finish by joining a five-way logjam for sixth place after two rounds of the Queen's Cup on Friday.

With his bogey-free, three-birdie round, the 31-year-old Bagtas from Pasay totalled 136, five strokes behind Thailand's Chinnarat Phadungjal, who posted twin 4-three-shot lead with a 65 for a 131 aggregate.

Pucay also matched strongly to the behavior Masters in Malaysia last week with a 69-71 before falling back in the weekend

PUCAY: 5 shots off

and finishing among the tailenders.

Marvin Dumandan also moved into position for his first big payday by firing a 67, after an opening 71, to climb into a deadlock for 16th place on 4-under 138.

Arjuna Lucero vies the last Filipino to secure either a second straight T1 for 343.

Antonio Macalanta rolled with a 2-under par 70 but missed the halfway cut of 146 by one shot. He scored 75 left him with no better than a 145 for two rounds.

Jerome Gelabarte (73-75, 147) and Jay Bayron (74-79, 149) also failed to advance.

Chinnarat, 26, produced a near-flawless display with seven birdies against a lone bogey at the Samthai Samui Country Club to leave the runner-up check with a cushiony target of 11 under par 133 at the $300,000 Asian Tour event.

Opened yesterday Sathorn by Nobuo Serizawa replied an eagle-spilled 66 to answer his second place on 134 while Korean rookie Kim Dae-hyun drew a 67 to be a further stroke back.

Joint overnight leader Bandesh Ajithkumar of Thailand struggled on the greens, a 71 leaving him five behind his close friend Chinnarat. Asian Tour News

Highlands Ladies Cup fires off today

THE COUNTRY'S TOP GOLFING ladies and their guests take centre stage today as they vie for top honors in various divisions in the fourth Highlands Ladies Cup at the Tagaytay Midlands Golf and Country Club in Tagaytay.

A field of some 150 players will tee off in the shotgun-start tournament at 7:30 a.m. after the ceremonial one-ball drive is ground by Tagaytay Highlands president Amy Tee, Willy Ortiz vice-chair of Tagaytay Highlands, CATS Motors president Rita Ang, Filipinas Shell chair and president Edgar Ortiz and tourney chair Mariet Perez.

Fabulous prizes are up for grabs in the different categories of the 18-hole contraction, to be played under the format 36 scoring format and held to foster camaraderie among the country's top golfing lady executives and corporate bigwigs, as well their guests in the government and private sectors.

A round-up ticket for two to the United States courtesy of Northwest Airlines, a 21 seats for hole-in-one from mobile Club Car and Mitsubishi are also giving away brand new golf carts for scor-in designated holes in the tournament hosted by San Miguel Corp. and CATS Motors.

The event is organized by the Tagaytay Highlands Ladies Chapter headed by their lady Orient Fernandez, president Diana Hernandez, vice-president Ilona Co and officials Holy Ilee, Rosalind Siby and Connie Manuel.

Unilever and Pacific on Line are the event's gold sponsors while Pagcor, Filipinas Shell, Smart, Security Bank, Bank of Commerce, Dream Satellite, Bingo Bonanza and Highlands Prime are the silver sponsors.

Leading the bronze sponsors are Odyssey Music, Geneva Mattress Inc., Double Dream, H&E Manufacturing, Philippine Airlines, Coca-Cola Corp., Universal Robina, Mark Finance, Rudy Project, Cosmo, Sun Fountain Faucets, Royal Caribbean Cruise Travel, Lascuña Inc., Sun Mist, Continental Airlines, Dynamic Sports, Intel, Gamenga Designs, 101Bike, Rosalind Wee, Honda Hen and Burlington.

The event is also supported by Ambassador Inn Lounge, Wilgards Castillo, Lizzy Fashions, Lim Pharma, Outback, Cafe de Ops, Bed Ribbon, Prawn, Bellevue Hotel Alabang, Hanford and Mayan.

The tournament also serves as a fund-raiser for the Sisters of Mary boys and girls town centers in Silang, Cavite.

ANOTHER SUNDAY OF SPECTACULAR UAAP MATCHES AT THE ARANETA COLISEUM

Due to insistent public demand, August 16 is bound to be another blockbuster Sunday at the Araneta Coliseum as the 2nd round of eliminations for the UAAP features Adamson vs. UE at 1:30 AM and Ateneo vs. La Salle at 5 PM.

Since the AdMU-DLSU match promises to be another epic showdown, two sets of tickets will again be printed and sold for the two separate matches slated for that day similar to what was done for the first match. Therefore, one set of basketball fans will be able to watch the Adamson vs. UE match while another batch of spectators can witness the Ateneo vs. La Salle showdown later that afternoon, enabling more fans to enjoy the face-off between the four schools.

The UAAP Board, together with event partners ABS CBN and Araneta Coliseum, is confident that UAAP basketball fans will support the league's initiatives to make the games more organized and accessible to more spectators. Upper A and Upper B are free seating so fans are required to come about two (2) hours prior the game to ensure them seats. And, for those patron and lower box ticket holders, best is to come one (1) hour prior the game proper to avoid congestion at the gates. For easier entry to the venue, spectators are encouraged to wear the colors closest to their seats (red gate - La Salle; green gate - Ateneo).

A limited number of General Admission and Upper A/Upper B tickets will be sold on the day itself. Those who will be buying their tickets right before the games on August 16 will be asked to pay for their tickets as they enter.

As a huge crowd is expected to troop to the Araneta Center on Sunday, basketball fans are advised to take the MRT/LRT to avoid difficulties in parking. Spectators are also asked to bring only small bags to avoid delays in queuing at the gates.

MOUNTAIN CHALLENGE Eastern Samar Gov. Ben P. Evardone (center, in sunglasses) raises the hands of the winners of the recent 1-to-Gov. Ben P. Evardone Mountain Bike Challenge on Clinton's Orange hold in Dolores town to raise awareness of the (traffic) of global warming. Bryan Rosales rated the Downhill Category (race).

World Series: ILLAM batters take 2nd loss

INTERNATIONAL LITTLE LEAGUER ASSOCIATION of Manila absorbed a 6-10 defeat at the hands of host Davao II on Thursday (Friday in Manila) in the 2009 Senior League softball World Series on Gaisano Country Drive.

The Manila batters' second loss in the 10-team tournament came a day after they overcame US Base squad Sharonway, New York, 6-3. The Filipinos opened their campaign with an 8-2 defeat to US Southwest Int. Calhoun, Louisiana, on Sunday.

Kelsey Oliphant pitched a no-hitter against Sharonway but was tagged for seven hits in the Davao batting to set the tone for the abbreviated win.

Illam tries to keep its side hopes alive against the US West squad from Hale, Montana at 8 p.m. Friday. Gold@Sports

SPORTS

Tiger roars

Woods grabs 1-shot lead in season's final Major

CHASKA, MINNESOTA—TIGER Woods didn't need any distraction or jaw-dropping shots as he tactfully assumed a one-shot lead at the US PGA Championship after Thursday's opening round at Hazeltine national.

He merely plodded—his word—his way around the course despite a one-stroke lead over defending champion Sidney Harrington.

Woods shot a 5-under 67, missing just two fairways and three greens. His round was blemish-free, only the third time he's opened a major without a bogey. The other two were at the US and British Opens in 2000, where he just happened to sets by a combined 23 shots.

"You don't have to be right ahead after the first round," Woods said. "The whole idea is not to make that many mistakes."

Woods' record when he has at least a share of the lead through 18 holes is only 13-11 on the PGA Tour, including 9-2 in the majors. And a few of the guys right behind him have been here before.

Ireland's Harrington, who has won British Open titles along with last year's Westminster Trophy, stayed with Woods through the morning until a bunker shot on the par-5 seventh was too strong and he had to settle for par.

Fifty Vijay Singh and American Justin Leon, also past PGA champions, both shot 69 while playing in the afternoon, and should have the best conditions of the day this day, when the wind was expected to howl.

Phil Mickelson struggled off the tee and with his short game in his round of 74.

Still, even if there were no concession speeches from the rest of the field, they know it will be an uphill battle.

"He's human," said Australian Robert Allenby, who is tied with Singh, Vanes and three others at 1 under. "He's the best in the world, so we expect him to win, because he's the best. He should. But you know what? It's three more days to go. And a lot can happen."

Woods isn't counting his 15th major—and first this year—quite yet, either. And he isn't the same guy who sets record golf balls, swearing and swerving the course for a last ball at last month's British Open, where he missed the cut in a major for only the second time in his professional career.

He's won the past two weekends, including a humbling duel with Harrington at Wentworth, and his game appears to get better each time he steps on the course.

Not even the supersized Hazeltine—it played at 7,680 yards despite some tees being moved because of the wind—could get in his way. He picked up three birdies on the par-5s, including a 3-wood to a lush bunker on the 603-yard 13th, with a lesson in his back. He took the outright lead on the par-5 seventh with a 249-yard iron shot, followed by a 6-iron to 20 feet.

"Years ago, he had probably easier flats in his game," Harrington said. "I think he's put a little bit of concentration on his game."

So much so that he doubted when Rivers Quiroz had what might be the shot of the tournament.

The Spaniard hit driver off the tee on the 606-yard 12th hole...from the mind...and it was only the green while 50 yards. Harrington stood 82ft. Boom went off pulling. Woods looked back at Quiroz and smiled, giving him a thumbs up.

"That's just stupid long," Woods said, grinning. "It let it that he into the mind's phenomenal."

Asked if he was jealous, Woods laughed.

"I used to be able to move the ball. Not anymore. I just plod my way around, about it." AP

TIGER Woods follows home a birdie putt on the third hole. AP

MICKELSON Struggling AP

HARRINGTON One down AP

Eagles give disgraced quarterback Vick a 'second chance'

PHILADELPHIA—DISGRACED QUARTERBACK Michael Vick was back in the NFL on Thursday, landing a job with the Philadelphia Eagles.

Agents Joel Segal confirmed Vick's signing, shortly before the team announced it in a text message. The Eagles gave Vick a one-year deal with an option for a second year.

The 29-year-old Vick, once the NFL's highest-paid player, has been out of action since 2006. The former Atlanta Falcons quarterback was convicted in August 2007 of conspiracy and running a dog-fighting operation, and served 18 of a 23-month sentence in federal prison. He also was suspended indefinitely by the NFL.

Commissioner Roger Goodell conditionally lifted Vick's suspension on July 27, allowing him to sign with a team, practice and play in the last two preseason games. Once the season begins, Vick can participate in all team activities except games, and Goodell said he would consider Vick for full reinstatement by Week 6 (Oct. 18-19) at the latest.

"I'm confident that as long as people go through the right process, they deserve a second chance," Eagles coach Andy Reid said. Vick's get great people on his side. He's proven he's on the right track."

The Eagles were in the playoffs last season under quarterback Donovan McNabb, and are still looking for their elusive first Super Bowl win.

McNabb has led the Eagles to five NFC championship games and one Super Bowl appearance in the last eight years, and was rewarded with a $5.5 million raise in the offseason.

Reid made sure to speaks with McNabb before signing Vick.

"I pretty much lobbied to get him here," McNabb said. "I believe in second chances and what better place to get a second chance than here with this group of guys. He's no threat to me. We had the opportunity to add another weapon to our offense." AP

Donaire out to fulfill American dream

DONAIRE Reinvented

SAN CARLOS, CALIFORNIA—WHEN Nonito Donaire Jr. fights Fernando Cerezo on Sept. 19 in Carson City, he will be fighting for more than a world title.

He will be fighting for his family's honor.

Donaire's father, Nonito Donaire Sr., was a boxer in the Philippines who had designs on a career in the United States. But he never made it out of the amateurs, and he never got the chance to see his son fight in the pros.

Donaire Sr. died of a heart attack in 2006 at the age of 42, and Donaire Jr. has been fighting for his father's memory ever since.

"I'm fighting for my father," Donaire said. "I'm fighting for my family. I'm fighting for my country. I'm fighting for my people. I'm fighting for my fans. I'm fighting for everybody."

Donaire Jr. has been fighting for a long time. He was born in Talibon, Bohol, and moved to the United States when he was 5 years old. He grew up in Oakland, California, and began boxing at the age of 8.

He was a standout amateur, winning the 2001 World Championships and the 2002 Asian Games. He was a member of the Philippine team at the 2004 Olympics in Athens, Greece, but he lost in the first round.

Donaire turned pro in 2005 and has been a force ever since. He has won titles in three weight classes and has a record of 25-1 with 18 knockouts.

His only loss came in 2007 when he was stopped in the 10th round by Vic Darchinyan. Donaire has since avenged that loss twice, winning a unanimous decision in 2008 and a first-round knockout in 2009.

Donaire's father was a big influence on his son's career. He was the one who got him into boxing, and he was the one who taught him the fundamentals of the sport.

"My father was a boxer, and he was a very good boxer," Donaire said. "He was a very good teacher. He taught me a lot of things about boxing, and I'm very grateful for that."

Donaire's father died before he could see his son fight in the United States, but Donaire has been dedicating his fights to his father's memory ever since.

"I'm fighting for my father's memory," Donaire said. "I'm fighting for my father's legacy. I'm fighting for my father's dreams. I'm fighting for my father's hopes. I'm fighting for my father's aspirations. I'm fighting for my father's everything."

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Editor Raul G. Marvelo ■ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

Farm output growth slows to 1.53%

Palay production up 3.59%, corn down 2.27%

By Riza T. Olchondra

GROWTH OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR SLOWED down to 1.53 percent in the first half from 4.72 percent in the same period last year, the Department of Agriculture (DA) reported yesterday.

Data from the department's Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS) showed that the farm sector grew a mere 0.87 percent in the second quarter compared with the 2.27 percent expansion in the first three months of 2009.

This could indicate that the agriculture sector would not be a major contributor to the country's gross domestic product this year, according to economists.

The DA said in a statement that things could have been worse were it not for increased fisheries, poultry and livestock outputs, which offset

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INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

AUGUST
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

AUGUST

(For more market figures see Page B2)

Stocks close lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED EVEN PERCENT lower yesterday on the absence of any major economic developments to lift the market, dealers said.

The composite index closed 6.01 points down at 2,858.01, while the all-shares index fell 0.27 percent to 1,808.88.

There were 46 gainers against 53 losers and 57 that were unchanged.

Volume amounted to 3.4 billion shares worth P2.69 billion.

The local currency traded at 47.80/$ to the dollar early on.

"Even until I say positive developments except that we are tracking the US market," said Lawrence de Leon of Asiasec Capital Equities Inc.

Expectations that the government would soon announce positive economic growth figures had already been discounted by investors. AFP

Ayala Land to venture into low-cost housing

By Doris C. Dumlao

AYALA LAND INC., LONG KNOWN FOR ITS upscale property developments, is diversifying into the low-cost residential segment with the creation of a new subsidiary that will sell housing units worth between P500,000 and P1.25 million.

The company disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday that its board of directors has approved the formation of a new wholly-owned unit targeting the market for "entry" homes.

The new subsidiary will be separate and distinct from its upscale development arm Ayala Land Premier as well as middle-income brands Alveo Land and Avida Land. But initial branches for the new product line will be erected as a sub-brand of Avida.

The entry into the affordable housing segment completes Ayala Land's portfolio of product offerings across different income segments.

Ayala Land intends to infuse P1 billion in seed capital to the new subsidiary on a staggered basis over the next three years, mainly to fund operating expenses and the property acquisition. The initial capitalization will come an initial run of six projects in select industrialized rural areas in southern and central Luzon where real estate demand is expected to be strong.

"The formation of this new subsidiary supports our strategy to expand our market beyond what we currently offer and serve a broader segment of the population that demands more affordable but quality residential developments," Ayala Land president Antonino Aquino said in a statement.

"This is a market wherein we see much opportunity and future growth," he said.

Plans are being drawn up for the subsidiary to launch its first project in Laguna within the first quarter of 2010.

Ayala Land said it was expecting to make a significant impact on the economic housing segment with an approach that would offer

AYALA LAND / B3

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Megaworld net profit up 12% at ₱2B in first half

MEGAWORLD CORP. POSTED A net income of ₱2 billion for the first half of 2009, up 12 percent from the same period last year, owing primarily to the continued strength of its real estate sales.

"Megaworld's business performance, once in the context of a continued challenging global business landscape, was better than anticipated," said Megaworld chair and president Andrew Tan. "Our results in the first half of the year clearly show that we are on the right track."

First-half consolidated revenues amounted to ₱8.75 billion, up 16 percent from ₱7.5 billion in the same period last year. Real estate sales contributed ₱6.57 billion, 15 percent higher than the ₱5.29 billion posted a year ago.

Rental income from its BPO office and retail developments hit a high of ₱939.17 million, up 46 percent from ₱645.02 million year on year.

Megaworld is the biggest mixed-use condominium developer and BPO office landlord in the Philippines. It pioneered the development of commercial townships that fit a "live-work-play-learn" model. To date, Megaworld has five townships within Metro Manila, as well as mixed-use projects in the Makati central business district.

The company has about 275,000 square meters of BPO office space and expects to complete another 60,000 square meters by year's end.

Its BPO office projects at Eastwood City in Quezon City and McKinley Hill in Taguig City posted an average 95-percent occupancy rate in the first six months of the year.

"We will continue to leverage on the strength of our business model," Tan said. "Megaworld further strengthened its balance sheet in the first half of the year to better cope with the current business environment. We intend to expand our presence in the property industry and be ready to seize possible growth opportunities."

Megaworld maintained a net cash position as of end-June, with cash and cash equivalents at ₱15.73 billion from ₱12.33 billion as of end-December last year. Total borrowings amounted to ₱12.25 billion as of end-June compared with ₱9.95 billion as of end-December last year.

Rental income soars 46% to P939M

Phoenix Petroleum net income up 13% in 1st half

By Jerry E. Nuevo

LISTED FIRM PHOENIX PETROLEUM Philippines Inc. said its net income rose 12 percent to ₱54.62 million in the first half as sales volume soared during the period.

In a filing with the Philippine Stock Exchange, Phoenix reported that its sales volume jumped 84 percent due to the increase in number of its retail stations.

Phoenix has 112 stations and is implementing an expansion program aimed at increasing its retail network to 120 stations by year's end.

"Our first-half per-liter income is in line with our targets as we aim to be the leading independent oil company in the country," said Phoenix president and CEO Jaime Ty. He added that Phoenix has been getting good feedback for station dealerships.

Phoenix also disclosed that its sales revenues nearly rose 27 percent to ₱5.22 billion in the first semester from ₱5.105 billion a year ago.

Company assets increased 15 percent to ₱3.66 billion as of June from ₱2.37 billion in December 2008 following the company's acquisition of Bauxonne Industrial Park Corp. (BIPC) in March this year.

BIPC owned and operated the Bauxonne Union Industrial Hub, which has been renamed as Phoenix Petroventures and is now the Phoenix Industrial Park. The park has its own 9-ha oil depot part with a draft at berth of 14 meters, capable of receiving panamax vessels.

In July, Phoenix inaugurated its Cebu depot located inside the park. The terminal, which sits on the 3.9-hectare property it acquired from Philippine Investment Management Inc., has a capacity to hold 50 million liters of finished petroleum products.

Ayala Land...

Turn to page B4

"an attractive design and high quality to a functioning and evolving community at a price point that is affordable for more of the country's young and emerging households."

In total and better is currently Ayala Land Premier, which sells residential units worth between ₱9 million and ₱20 million. This segment accounts for about 40-45 percent of residential property sales, while the rest is split between middle-income and affordable segments under the Alveo and Avida brands.

Philweb raises par value of shares to ₱1

By Mike Morales

SHAREHOLDERS OF PHILWEB Corp. yesterday approved a change in the par value of the company's stocks to accommodate potential institutional investors, although an official of the company declined to confirm any new players coming in.

"I'm not yet prepared to make that disclosure," PhilWeb vice chair Eric Recto said when asked if the change in value was part of preparations for the entry of new financiers. "It's not in preparation for a new investor. It's just a request from some investors."

Recto explained that the conversion of PhilWeb's par value to ₱1 a piece from one centavo was aimed at making the company more attractive to institutional investors. He added that the big investors were barred from investing in "penny stocks."

PhilWeb chair Federico Ong-pin was not on a business trip during yesterday's special stockholders' meeting, Recto said.

Seeing a rapid growth in the first semester, PhilWeb restated its target earnings for the year as the two things are going for the gaming company.

Recto said the opponents expansion of its Internet gaming and mobile content company will also rehink their profit target for this year.

The official said the company remained on track to hit its goal of making a net profit of ₱500 million this year as a result of more e-casinos being put up through the archipelago, in partnership with the state-owned Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp (Pagcor).

As of August, PhilWeb has put up 356 Pagcor e-Gaming cafes (Pegs), according to company president Dennis Valdes.

The company also projected that they stood to earn around ₱350 million in the second half if the rate of expansion would be sustained.

PhilWeb earlier reported a 52-percent increase in its first semester net profit to ₱227.6 million year on year.

Ripple to sell shares

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK Exchange will see its first initial public offering for this year courtesy of Ripple E-Business International Inc., a software solutions provider, which plans to debut on the small and medium enterprise (SME) board of the local bourse on Sept. 3.

Ripple will offer 4.36 million primary common shares, or 29 percent of its total shares, to the public at ₱4.27 per share from Aug. 10 to 21.

The company will thus raise ₱223 million from the forthcoming IPO. It plans to use ₱9 million out of the total proceeds for research and development as well as the development of solutions for the pharmaceutical industry and for warehouse and distribution operations. It plans to hire at least 10 programmers and consultants within 12 months of listing.

About ₱7.5 million will be utilized for marketing expenses, while the balance will be used to boost working capital.

The lone manager and underwriter for the offering is Asian Alliance Investment Corp.

A total of 15.27 million common shares will be listed on the SME board, which means 71 percent will be kept by the existing owners.

Philippine Stock Exchange

As of August 14, 2009

Forex rates

August 14, 2009 Country	Unit	Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
Japan	Yen	0.5	0.0	0.5
United Kingdom	Pound	1.9	0.0	1.9
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.1	0.0	0.1
Switzerland	Franc	0.4	0.0	0.4
Canada	Dollar	0.5	0.0	0.5
Singapore	Dollar	0.4	0.0	0.4
Australia	Dollar	0.4	0.0	0.4
Bahrain	Dinar	2.3	0.0	2.3
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.1	0.0	0.1
Brunei	Dollar	0.4	0.0	0.4
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.0	0.0	0.0
Thailand	Baht	0.0	0.0	0.0
UAE	Dirham	0.1	0.0	0.1
EU	Euro	1.9	0.0	1.9
Korea	Won	0.0	0.0	0.0
China	Yuan	0.1	0.0	0.1
Taiwan	Dollar	0.0	0.0	0.0
Denmark	Krone	0.3	0.0	0.3
India	Rupee	0.0	0.0	0.0
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.3	0.0	0.3
New Zealand	Dollar	0.4	0.0	0.4
Sweden	Krona	0.2	0.0	0.2
Canada	Dollar	0.5	0.0	0.5

Public Service Announcement

Winthrop Pharmaceuticals Philippines, Inc. would like to announce that the following products will be available in drugstores in September:

Product	Suggested Retail Price
Winthrop Irbesartan 150 mg tablet	24.38
Winthrop Irbesartan 150mg + Hydrochlorothiazide 12.5 mg tablet	25.13
Winthrop Irbesartan 300 mg tablet	40.00
Winthrop Irbesartan 300mg + Hydrochlorothiazide 12.5 mg tablet	41.50
Winthrop Metronidazole 500 mg tablet	11.75

Winthrop is a global generics company launched in 2007 and has been providing access to quality generic medicines priced within the budget of Filipino patients.

Winthrop believes that the availability of quality generics is a key factor in the healthcare management of Filipinos.

Ayala Corp. H1 income slides as ALI offsets BPI, Globe gains

By Dodin L. Lucas

AYALA CORP. YESTERDAY REPORTED LOWER net income for the first half as the absence of gains from last year's asset sales offset strong earnings at its banking and telecommunications units.

In a statement, the country's largest and oldest conglomerate said that its net income for the first semester of 2009 reached P4.3 billion, representing a 35-percent decline from the same period last year.

Excluding gains from asset sales last year, however, net income rose by 14 percent.

According to the company, key business units posted healthy growth with equity earnings from Globe Telecom and Bank of the Philippine Islands up by 7 percent and 27 percent, respectively. This cushioned the 35-percent fall in equity earnings from Ayala Land Inc. (ALI).

Companies under its AC Capital division also contributed positively as it reversed last year's loss following a significant improvement in its electronics manufacturing services unit, Integrated Microelectronics, and the recovery in its higher earnings from Manila Water Co.

"We are encouraged by the earnings trend across our key business units despite the marked slowdown in the economy," Ayala Corp. president and COO Fernando Zobel de Ayala said. "While conditions will remain challenging, we are much more optimistic given the resilience displayed by each of our businesses during this challenging period."

"We will continue to see earnings stabilize in the near term and expect growth to accelerate next year," he added.

While ALI's core net income in the first half dropped by 14 percent to P1.87 billion, core earnings in the second quarter rose by 6 percent to P961 million, indicative of a more positive trend.

This was underpinned by a resurgent property market with buyers confidence increasing particularly in the high-end residential segment. Residential development revenues grew by 39 percent to P9.71 billion in the second quarter.

Ayala Land Premiere, the company's high-end brand, saw a strong recovery, while the middle and affordable brands, Alveo and Avida, performed steadily.

Demand from the overseas Filipino market remained solid with sales up 36 percent versus the previous quarter.

ALI's revenues from its shopping centers rose by 8 percent to P2.11 billion in the first semester this year driven by the strong performance of Market! Market! as well as the new expansion in gross leasable area from new malls Circuit Makati 5 and Cebu 6.

Revenues from corporate business likewise increased by 84 percent to P766 million with increased contribution from the new BPO buildings that became operational in the second half of last year and early this year.

Bank of the Philippine Islands likewise reported profitable growth with net revenues in the first semester reaching P5.37 billion, up 38 percent over the previous year. Revenues rose by 19 percent with positive contribution from both net interest and noninterest income.

Business units under AC Capital contributed P77 million in equity earnings in the first half of the year from a loss of P38 million in the same period last year. This reversal was driven by a significant improvement in the performance of Manila Water and IMI.

Conglomerate also boosted by IMI, Manila Water

Filinvest Land defies weak market in H1

PROPERTY DEVELOPER FILINVEST LAND INC. (FLI) yesterday disclosed that its net income for the first half of 2009 increased by 6 percent to P930 million, from P874 million during the same period last year.

According to the firm, it was able to sustain its sales growth despite the downturn in the economy.

Total revenues amounted to P2.473 billion, 11 percent more than the P2.235 billion generated during January to June 2008.

Real estate sales were 11 percent higher versus the same period last year, and continued to account for the bulk of revenues at P1.369 billion or 63 percent of total.

Rental income, on the other hand, contributed P506 million, 6 percent more than the P506 million generated in the first half of last year.

As of the end of June 2009, total assets stood at P53.613 billion, while stockholders' equity was at P37.925 billion. The company's leverage position remained to be very low, with debt-to-equity ratio at only 18 percent and net debt-to-equity ratio of 14 percent.

Total residential sales reservations generated in first half of the year reached P3.72 billion, 14 percent more than the P3.26 billion generated during the same period last year.

The demand for FLI's core business of residential mass housing for the socialized, affordable and middle-income markets, remains steady.

FLI's newest product lines—townhouse/condo buildings (SMRs), continues to attract buyers' interest.

MRR projects are inner city projects with several 3-story buildings clustered around the project's central amenity area. SMRs are attractive because they offer a much better living environment due to its low density development, compared to a high-rise condominium building. In addition, the cost of the unit is less due to lower construction cost because of the lower building height. MSRs to inner city locations provide an alternative to buyers who do not want the daily commute to and from Laguna or Cavite, and prefer the lower cost and better quality of life provided by MRRs, compared to high-rise condominium projects within Metro Manila.

Rental income generated from Festival Supermall, PE-Com Tower and Northgate Cyberzone in Alabang, contributed 24 percent to total revenues.

The 6-percent year-on-year growth is attributed to higher lease rates on renewed leases and the contribution of Block 1 and Block 2 which came on stream during the second half of 2008.

FLI's total office building portfolio stood at over 122,000 square meters as of June 2009, with an average take-up rate of 90 percent. Two buildings, Vector One and Vector Two, with a combined gross leasable area (GLA) of close to 36,000 square meters, are under construction and will come on stream in 2010.

For this year, the company's target is to launch 29 new projects and phases with an estimated sales value of P7.4 billion, across all market segments.

In the first half, 11 new projects and phases have already been launched, with a sales value of P3.2 billion, equivalent to 43 percent of the full-year target.

Dodin L. Lucas

PAL Q1 income declines as 'dark clouds' linger

PHILIPPINE AIRLINES (PAL) YESTERDAY reported total comprehensive income of P1.5 million for the first quarter of its fiscal year ending June 2009, down 21 percent compared to the figure reported during the same period last year.

In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), PAL said total revenues dropped by 12 percent to $394.9 million compared with $448.6 million for the same period in 2008.

This was due mainly to the 23-percent decrease in passenger revenues of $99 million, as passenger traffic and yields continue to decline.

Other international carriers are also reporting weakening demand, with signs of an incipient recovery in the global industry yet to emerge. Fears over the spread of Influenza A (H1N1) are also contributing to the falling load factors of PAL as well as other global airlines.

Total expenses for the first quarter amounted to $358.5 million, 11 percent lower than the previous year's figure of $401.6 million. Lower fuel prices contributed significantly in reducing the company's expenses.

In the current quarter, PAL, like most other global airlines, is facing the specter of "extremely weak" passenger traffic and cargo demand amid tepid demand brought about by the lingering effects of the economic slowdown.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) recently revised its projections for fiscal year 2009-2010 to a combined loss of $9 billion for all member airlines.

PAL said it is implementing initiatives aimed at meeting its revenue targets as well as further reducing costs.

Last month, PAL took delivery of its third reconfigured Boeing 747-400 aircraft equipped with enhanced cabin amenities including lie-flat first-class seats and state-of-the-art inflight entertainment system. PAL also upgraded its website which now enables customers to book and buy tickets using not just credit cards but also Bancnet/ATM cards.

Dodin L. Lucas

Farm output growth slows to 1.53%

From page B1

the decline in the production of crops.

It said that overall crop production, which contributed 47.03 percent of total agricultural production, shrank 1.31 percent in the first six months.

BAS director Romeo Recide said that in the six months to June, palay production grew 3.59 percent to 7.38 million metric tons (MT), or slower than the 5.84-percent growth posted in the first half of 2008.

Corn output fell 2.27 percent to 3.2 million MT, a big crash from the 10.63-percent expansion a year ago.

Banana, along with coconut, peanut and cassava, registered production increases of 4.97 percent, 1.36 percent, 4.16 percent and 4.32 percent, respectively in the first half.

On the positive side, fisheries grew 4.9 percent in January-June 2009 from a year earlier. This subsector contributed 27.02 percent of total agricultural production.

Poultry, including meat and egg production, expanded 4.31 percent and contributed 18.37 percent of this economic sector's total output.

The livestock subsector rebounded from its contraction last year with a 2.43-percent increase in the first six months. It contributed 11.39 percent to the total agricultural output.

The DA said that the National Food Security (NFS) would try to encourage corn production in the 1st District of Isabela by buying programs in major corn-producing regions. The budget is slightly down from the P3.9 billion announced in May.

The agriculture sector accounts for about a fifth of the domestic economy and employs a third of the country's labor force.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, slimmed to customers on the production recovery in the first half, said last June that annual quarter growth could be between 1.5 and 2 percent compared with 5.4 percent in the second half of 2008.

Economist Benjamin Diokno, a former budget secretary, said that current agricultural performance indicated this sector might "not be a major contributor" to economic growth this year.

He said that the worse found additional challenges in the fourth quarter with the onset of the El Niño phenomenon, which causes extreme shifts in weather.

"With industries struggling too, services appear to be the only remaining major source of growth for the Philippine economy."

Second-quarter GDP data will be released within the month.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. IV-A
August 10, 2009

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following employers/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

	Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Citizenship	Position
1.	PRIME MICRO ELECTRONICS (PHILIPPINES), INC. LOT 9, Dr. Yanga Drive, Bgy. 1, ...	Mr. Yoon Bum Yeol / Korean	Production Service Manager
2.	ACADEMY PLASTIC MODEL TOY COMPANY, INC. CEFZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Doo-Ho Kwon / Korean	Production Manager
3.	PANASONIC MANUFACTURING PHILIPPINES CORPORATION Ortigas Avenue Ext., Cainta, Rizal	Mr. Shigeyoshi Terawaki / Japanese	Director
4.	PHILIPPINE CHIHARA RUBBER CORPORATION PEZA, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Isao Ikuta / Japanese	Assistant General Manager
5.	INTEGRATED MICRO-ELECTRONICS, INC. Laguna Technopark, Binan, Laguna	Mr. Glenn Kramer / German	Senior Test Development Engineer
6.	SISTERS OF MARY OF MANDEVILLE, INC. Bgy. Biga II, Silang, Cavite	Ms. Myung Hee Kim / Korean	Overall Worker in Charge
7.	SISTERS OF MARY OF MANDEVILLE, INC. Bgy. Biga II, Silang, Cavite	Ms. Jung Duck Lee / Korean	Treasurer
8.	SISTERS OF MARY OF MANDEVILLE, INC. Bgy. Biga II, Silang, Cavite	Ms. Myung Sook Lee / Korean	Local Supervisor and Administrator
9.	SISTERS OF MARY OF MANDEVILLE, INC. Bgy. Biga II, Silang, Cavite	Ms. Hyungsin Hwa / Korean	Marketing and Human Relations in Charge
10.	SISTERS OF MARY OF MANDEVILLE, INC. Bgy. Biga II, Silang, Cavite	Ms. Ok Soon Kim / Korean	President
11.	SISTERS OF MARY OF MANDEVILLE, INC. Bgy. Biga II, Silang, Cavite	Ms. Sun Lim Choi / Korean	Local Supervisor
12.	SISTERS OF MARY OF MANDEVILLE, INC. Bgy. Biga II, Silang, Cavite	Ms. Jeung Ok Park / Korean	Carpentry and Maintenance Department In Charge
13.	SISTERS OF MARY OF MANDEVILLE, INC. Bgy. Biga II, Silang, Cavite	Mr. Bon Soo Koo / Korean	Male Workers In Charge

If you have any information/objection to the above-mentioned applications please communicate with this Regional Director.

ATTY. RICARDO S. MARTINEZ, SR., CESO II
Regional Director

DBP
Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION FOR NEGOTIATED OFFER

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive offers on a Best Offer Basis for the Bank property described below. Offers should be submitted at the 6th Floor, Office of the Chairperson, Property Disposal Committee, DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue, corner Makati Avenue, Makati City, and the value of offer basis, 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 19, 2009.

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	FLOOR PRICE
DBP Naga Peñafrancia Extension, Magsaysay Avenue, Naga City	RECTANGULAR LOT, AREA 1,000 SQ.M. MORE OR LESS. Registered under TCT No. 2006000123	P 18,000,000.00

CONDITIONS ARE REMINDED:

1. To inspect the property to determine its actual condition before submitting his/her offer to the bank.
2. To submit his/her offer to prospective in DBP's Official Negotiated Offer to Purchase Form available at PMD, 7th Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours.
3. That the sale shall be subject to other terms and condition which may be imposed by the Bank.

For inquiries, please call Mr. Edgardo S. Gonzales at telephone number 810-2888 and Mr. Carlos G. Galicia at telephone number 818-9511 loc. 2060/2061

(Sgd.) MVP JESSICA A. BALMACEDA
Acting Head, Property and Security Management & Chairperson PDC

PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER
East Avenue, Quezon City
is now accepting applications for

FELLOWSHIPS:
I. Pediatric Cardiovascular Medicine Department
• 3 years Residency in General Pediatrics accredited by PPS
• at least 1 year Pediatric Cardiology Training in Diplomate in Pediatrics
II. Pediatric Pulmonology Medicine Section
• Certificate of Residency in General Pediatrics from PPS accredited institution
• 2 years Pediatric Pulmonology training in Diplomate in Pediatrics
III. Cardiovascular Division
• 3 years Residency in General Anesthesia accredited by PNA (Board eligible)
IV. Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery Division
• 2 years Residency in General Surgery accredited by PCS (Board eligible)
Deadline for submission of applications is on August 31, 2009
Academic Year 2010 starts on January 1, 2010

V. Adult Cardiology Department
Qualifications:
• Certificate of Residency Training in Internal Medicine accredited by PCP
• PCP Diplomate
Deadline for submission of applications is on August 31, 2009
Academic Year 2010 starts on January 1, 2010

RESIDENCIES: (For Medical Board Passers)
I. Nuclear Medicine Division
II. Laboratory Medicine Division (Formerly Histological and Clinical Laboratory)
III. Cardiopulmonary Intensive Medicine
IV. Heart Failure Unit

V. Post Fellowship Program
1. Nursing
2. Nuclear Medicine
3. Laboratory Medicine
Deadline for submission of applications is on August 31, 2009
Academic Year 2010 starts on January 1, 2010

General Requirements:
1. Medical Diploma
2. Transcript of Records with General Weighted Average
3. Internship/Board Rating
4. Valid ID
5. Three (3) sets of Recommendations with at least one letter written by the Training Officer and Chairman of the previous Training Institution (Applications or photocopies will not be accepted)
6. Four (4) pcs. 2" x 2" recent colored pictures

Please address and communications to:
ANESTHESIA MANUEL, M.D.
Department Manager II
The Department of Education, Training and Research
Philippine Heart Center
East Avenue, Quezon City

For further inquiries, please contact Ms. Carmela G. Rivera or Ms. Ma. Luisa T. Amparo with the nos. 925-2401 local 4606, 4607, 4608, 4609 and faxline 9296562, or you can email at cgr@phc.gov.ph

Celebrating Freedom from High Cost of Medicines

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9502 otherwise known as the "Universally Accessible Cheaper Quality Medicines Act of 2008", the following medicines should be sold at a price NO HIGHER than the following **Maximum Drug Retail Prices** (MDRP)

ACTIVE INGREDIENT/ MOLECULE	DOSAGE STRENGTH AND FORM	Maximum Drug Retail Price (PhP)
	ANTI-HYPERTENSIVE	
1. Amlodipine (including its S-isomer and all salt form)	2.5 mg tablet	8.60
	5 mg tablet	22.85
	10 mg tablet	38.50
	ANTI-CHOLESTEROL	
2. Atorvastatin	10 mg film-coated tablet	34.45
	20 mg film-coated tablet	39.13
	40 mg film-coated tablet	50.50
	80 mg film-coated tablet	50.83
	Amlodipine besilate 5 mg + Atorvastatin calcium 10 mg tablet	45.75
	Amlodipine besilate 5 mg + Atorvastatin calcium 20 mg tablet	66.25
	Amlodipine besilate 5 mg + Atorvastatin calcium 40 mg tablet	84.42
	Amlodipine besilate 5 mg + Atorvastatin calcium 80 mg tablet	89.99
	Amlodipine besilate 10 mg + Atorvastatin calcium 10 mg tablet	51.13
	Amlodipine besilate 10 mg + Atorvastatin calcium 20 mg tablet	73.25
	Amlodipine besilate 10 mg + Atorvastatin calcium 40 mg tablet	91.79
	Amlodipine besilate 10 mg + Atorvastatin calcium 80 mg tablet	91.79
	ANTIBIOTIC/ ANTIBACTERIAL	
3. Azithromycin and all its Salt form	250 mg tablet	108.50
	200 mg/5 mL powder for suspension (15 mL)	427.50
	200 mg/5 mL powder for suspension (22.50 mL)	638.00
	500 mg tablet	151.43
	500 mg vial for injection	992.50
	2 g granules	468.00
	ANTI-NEOPLASTICS/ ANTI-CANCER	
4. Cytarabine	100 mg/ mL ampul/vial (IV/SC)	240.00
	100 mg/ mL ampul/vial (IV/SC) (5mL) or 500 mg vial	900.00
	100 mg/ mL ampul/vial (IV/SC) (10mL) or 1g vial	1800.00
	20 mg/mL (5mL) ampul/vial for injection	1980.00
5. Doxorubicin and all its Salt form	10 mg powder vial for injection	1485.75
	50 mg powder vial for injection	2265.74

As per Executive Order No. 821 entitled **" Prescribing the Maximum Drug Retail Prices for Selected Drugs and Medicines that Address Diseases that Account For the Leading Causes of Morbidity and Mortality"**

Section 2b. The Maximum Drug Retail Price of all drugs and medicines stated herein shall be imposed in all retail outlets, public or private, including drugstores, hospitals and hospital pharmacies, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), convenience stores and supermarkets, and the like.

2b.2. No public or private entity or person shall be allowed to sell, reimburse, or demand from the public or patients payment or compensation higher than the MDRP.

This is effective **AUGUST 15, 2009**

FOR STRICT COMPLIANCE UNDER PENALTY OF LAW

GENERICS SAVES

OK-DOH-K!

OK sa Kalusugan,
OK sa Bayan!

please cut

Sec. Francisco T. Duque III
Department of Health

Sec. Eduardo R. Ermita

Celebrating Freedom from High Cost of Medicines

50% OFF

VOLUNTARY REDUCTION PRICE LIST

ACTIVE INGREDIENT/ MOLECULE	DOSAGE STRENGTH AND FORM	COMPANY	OLD RETAIL PRICE	GMA GOVERNMENT MEDIATED ACCESS PRICE
ANTI-HYPERTENSIVE				
1. Telmisartan	40 mg tablet	Boehringer	41.00	28.70
	Telmisartan 40 mg + Hydrochlorothiazide 12.5 mg tablet	Boehringer	44.00	30.80
	80 mg tablet	Boehringer	88.00	44.00
	Telmisartan 80 mg + Hydrochlorothiazide 12.5 mg tablet	Boehringer	88.00	44.00
2. Irbesartan	150 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis via Winthrop	48.75	34.50
	Irbesartan 150 mg + Hydrochlorothiazide 12.5 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis via Winthrop	56.34	33.13
	300 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis via Winthrop	85.00	40.00
	Irbesartan 300 mg + Hydrochlorothiazide 12.5 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis via Winthrop	92.00	41.00
ANTI-THROMBOTIC				
3. Clopidogrel	75 mg film-coated tablet	Sanofi-Aventis	122.00	61.70
ANTI-DIABETIC/ ANTICHOLESTEMIC				
4. Glibenclamide	50 mg Modified Release tablet	Servier	10.00	7.00
	80 mg tablet	Servier	10.00	7.00
ANTIBIOTIC/ ANTIBACTERIAL				
5. Piperacillin + Tazobactam	Piperacillin 2 g + Tazobactam 250 mg vial	Wyeth	2715.48	795.00
	4 g + Tazobactam 500 mg vial	Wyeth	4814.00	1275.00
6. Ciprofloxacin	500 mg tablet	Bayer	84.00	41.91
	500 mg tablet (Extended Release)	Bayer	96.22	49.00
	1 g tablet	Bayer	148.33	73.99
	250 mg tablet	Bayer	66.10	33.97
	2 mg/ml, 100 ml/ inf injection	Bayer	1888.11	943.00
	2 mg/ml, (50 ml.) in 100 mg/ IV infusion (50 ml.)	Bayer	1448.87	724.43
	400 mg (200 ml.) inf injection	Bayer	2297.11	1003.00
7. Meloxicam	15 mg/1ml, (60 ml.) suspension	Sanofi-Aventis	121.00	60.00
	500 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis via Winthrop	23.00	11.70
	500 mg (100ml.) IV infusion	Sanofi-Aventis	370.00	185.10
8. Co-Amoxiclav (Amoxicillin + Clavulanic acid)	625 mg tablet	GSK	97.10	48.00
	375 mg tablet	GSK	70.00	34.70
	1 g tablet	GSK	144.00	71.30
	600 mg vial for injection	GSK	887.00	443.70
	1.2 g vial for injection	GSK	1180.10	590.40
	Amoxicillin 200 mg + Clavulanic acid 28.5 mg/5ml. (70ml.) suspension	GSK	555.00	277.70
	Amoxicillin 125 mg + Clavulanic acid 31.25 mg/5 ml. (60ml.) suspension	GSK	378.00	189.00
	Amoxicillin 250 mg + Clavulanic acid 62.5 mg/ 5 ml. (60ml.) suspension	GSK	888.00	444.00
	Amoxicillin 400 mg + Clavulanic acid 57 mg/5 ml. (70 ml.) suspension	GSK	940.00	470.20
	Amoxicillin 600 mg + Clavulanic acid 64 mg/5 ml. (50 ml.) suspension	GSK	883.10	441.60
ANTI-MYOPLASTIC/ ANTI-CANCER				
9. Docetaxel	10 mg multidose/ inj injection	Bristol-Meyer Squibb via Zuellig	3,700.00	1850.00
10. Carboplatin	10 mg/ml, (15 ml.) vial or 150 mg inj injection	Bristol-Meyer Squibb via Zuellig	2,022.00	1000.00
11. Cisplatin	50 mg powder vial for injection	Bristol-Meyer Squibb via Zuellig	2844.00	1139.00
12. Cyclophosphamide	50 mg tablet	Bristol-Meyer Squibb via Zuellig	32.00	17.00
	200 mg vial for injection	Baxter	888.00	170.00
	500 mg vial for injection	Bristol-Meyer Squibb via Zuellig	888.00	344.00
	1 g or 1000 mg vial for injection (no innovator locally)	Qualimed	1,100.00 (most expensive brand)	877.00
13. Etoposide (No innovator locally)	100 mg tablet	Qualimed	1100.00 (most expensive brand)	880.00
14. Mercaptopurine	50 mg tablet	GSK	75.00	32.00
15. Methotrexate sodium (No innovator locally)	2.5 mg tablet	Qualimed	22.00 (most expensive brand)	11.00
	50 mg/ 2ml, vial for injection	Qualimed	513.00 (most expensive brand)	256.00
16. Rituxan	500 mg/ 50ml for injection	Baxter	888.00	180.47

The price cuts will be effective starting August 15, 2009. However, the small and medium sized drugstores with manual operations will be allowed until September 15, 2009 to reconcile and validate inventories already in the shelves.

After this date, appropriate sanctions would be imposed on non-compliant manufacturers, distributors, traders, retailers, and others.

GENERICS SAVES

OK-DOH-K!

OK sa Kalusugan,
OK sa Bayan!

Sec. Francisco T. Duque III
Department of Health

please cut

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Lydia Bonifacio Mariano

who peacefully joined our Lord on July 21, 2009 at the age of 79

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all of you, our relatives and friends, who sent flowers, messages of sympathy, spent precious time with us and expressed in many countless ways your love, sympathy, and support during our time of greatest sorrow. Your kindness will always be remembered.

Kennely Ann Lacia-Binay

June 15, 1988 – August 11, 2009

Our dear Kennely Ann Lacia Binay returned home to the Father last August 11, 2009 at the age of 21. She is survived by husband Jojomar Erwin, Jr., daughters Jojomarie Alexi, Maria Isabel, Maria Kennely and son, Jojomar III; father Edgardo Lacia, mother Teresita Lacia; grandparents Lutardo Lacia and Magno and Adelina Sanchez; brothers Peter Alquiro, Richard Alvin, Edgardo Allan and sister Hazel Ann; father-in-law Mayor Jojomar Binay, mother-in-law Dra. Elenita Binay and sisters-in-law Nancy Binay-Angeles, Abigail Binay-Campos, Ann-Ann Binay-Alcantara and JM Binay.

Ken-kun will always be remembered as a beautiful and bubbly person who was a great wife, mother, daughter, sister and friend. Just as she could brighten a room with a sweet smile, she now brightens the heavens in the arms God's angels.

The wake is being held at Batasan 101, Sariel St., San Antonio Village, Makati City. She will be cremated on August 19, 2009, Wednesday at the Heritage Park in Taguig after the 10:00 a.m. Mass in National Shrine of the Sacred Heart. (Call 8918629 for details).

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535-2616 • 531-2154
• Fax 535-5222

GF Traveller's Life Bldg., 490 T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita Manila
on front of National Museum
Trunkline 523-0377
loc. 153 or 130
Telefax 528-3210

Cecilia Zuño Gomez

Died peacefully on August 14, 2009 at the age of 94.

Her children **Ruben** and **Josefina** Sy, **Jaime** and **Eglantine** Montenegro, and **Cesar** and **Dra. Milagros Llanes**; grandchildren, **Alex** and **Divina Pascual**, **John-John**, twins **Dra. Jamilla** and **Regina**, and great grandchildren **Malmal** and **Stefan**.

Request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, EDSA, Makati City.

Cremation will also be at Loyola Guadalupe after the 10:00 a.m. Mass on Sunday, August 16, 2009.

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies and whoever believes in Me will never die."
— John 11:25-26

Our Dearly Beloved

Nenita Santos Crisologo

Peacefully joined our Lord on August 13, 2009 at the age of 67.

Her loving husband **DANTE**, sons **GERALD** and **ARIEL**, daughters-in-law **ANNA** and **IRA**, grandchildren Bianca, Gabby and Andy, mother **TERESITA** and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie at Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe, Makati until August 15, 2009.

Interment will be on Saturday, August 22, 2009 at the Oratory of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral Pinag City after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

RAUL RICERRA CARAG

June 22, 1930 – August 9, 2009

His family, only sister **PICHONA CARAG-ESPINA**, nieces, nephews and grandchildren wish to thank all relatives and friends who condoled with them.

CLASSIFIEDS

In Loving Memory on the Sixth (6th) Death Anniversary of

LILIA DABLO FARIN-VITUG

"I am not praying for the world, but those you have given me, for they are Yours."

You live on –
in the minds that you inspired,
in the lives that you improved,
in the hearts that you touched.
You live on –
and you shall never die.

Lovingly remembered on his 3rd anniversary as eternal life

FR. CORNELIO LAGERWEY, SVD

Holy Mass shall be offered at various churches

FCL Ass., Inc.
In behalf of
• Eva Castro, Jr. Yu • Eva A. Castro-Lopez •
• Pacita Tinio • Alan Peter C. Reyes •
• E. Kim • R. Tinio • Friends •

Born in Life on May 5, 1935
Born to Eternal Life on August 15, 1993

Friar of the Assumption of Mary

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
DARIAG COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
Dariag, Cebu
Trunkline: (032) 234-5678 / (032) 234-5679
Fax: (032) 234-5680
e-mail: dca@yahoo.com.ph

NOTICE OF SEARCH AND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

- Must be a Filipino citizen
- Must be a holder of Master's degree in Agriculture or any related field
- Must have a minimum of 5 years of experience in teaching and/or research
- Must have a proven track record as an administrator, especially in the academic and research fields
- Must be physically and mentally fit to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position
- Must not be related within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity to any member of the Board of Trustees or to the incumbent President or Vice President of the College

Interested applicants may secure the application form and the qualification standards from the Office of the President of the College and submit the same with the following:

- Letter of application addressed to the Chairman, Board of Trustees
- Personal Data Sheet (CS Form No. 212)
- Transcript of Records (TOR) and Diploma
- Certificate of Employment
- Certificate of Eligibility / Rating / Board / Bar Exam Result
- Original Copy of Recent Performance Rating (not more than 6 months from the date without exception)
- Seminars Attended
- Publications
- Awards / Recognition
- Other Relevant Documents

- Letter shall NOT have any erasure or alteration
- Only complete documents shall be accepted and processed
- Applicants who will be found to have committed misrepresentation of facts in the application shall be automatically disqualified from the selection process
- Only applicants for whom interviews are scheduled will be informed
- Only qualified applicants will be considered for the position
- Applicants who will not be considered for the position will not be informed
- Applicants who will not be considered for the position will not be returned their submitted documents
- Applicants who will not be considered for the position will not be returned their submitted documents

Applications must be received by the Office of the President on or before September 15, 2009

MR. MANUEL MAGLALANG
Chairman, Board of Trustees

MR. ROBERTO LAGMAN
Officer-in-Charge, Office of the President

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Be it known that there is an outstanding warrant of arrest for **Ms. Ms. Teresa D. Mina** of No. 37 Ilaya Compound, Brgy. Indangan, Quezon City, Quezon City whose picture appears below:

Criminal Case No. D-M-127363-64 for Qualified Theft
(2) counts; Branch 205, RTC Quezon City

Criminal Case No. D-M-150362
For Qualified Theft
Branch 100, RTC Quezon City

Please direct any information leading to her arrest or whereabouts to:

Security & Investigation Unit
Telephone Nos. 840-1500 loc. 1010;
474-4500, 474-4507, 474-4508 & 474-4510

(Not to be published)

INVITATION TO BID
"AS IS WHERE IS"

Damaged Motor Vehicles

2008 MIT. OUTLANDER / ZF08-147
2005 HONDA CIVIC / RCN-352

For particulars, please call
ABJ Ins. (Phils.) Co., Inc.
c/o Tristan Yoro/Arvin Caligo at
Tel. No. 815-30-80

NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS

The Widest Reaching Classifieds

More Classifieds

Wonder Island	A4
DBP	B3
DOLE Region IV	B3
Phil. Heart Center	B5
PITC (a)	B7
PITC (b)	B7

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Oil rises to $71/bbl on economy, equities rally

Blackstone CEO Stephen Schwarzman (left) with Oracle CEO Larry Ellison. Schwarzman is the highest-paid US CEO in 2008, bumping Ellison down to No. 2 on the list, according to a report by independent research group The Corporate Library AFP

Schwarzman highest paid CEO

BOSTON—TAKING HIS PRIVATE EQUITY firm public paid off big for Blackstone Group LP's Stephen Schwarzman, who became the top-paid chief executive in the United States last year, a title he is likely to retain for some time, according to an study released on Thursday.

But the scarred souls toiling backs now running on secondary company.

Their CEOs represented seven of the 10 highest-paid US CEOs in 2008, according to a report by independent research group The Corporate Library.

Schwarzman bumped Oracle Corp.'s Larry Ellison down to No. 2 on the list. They were followed by seven oil CEOs and Richard Fuscha, who had seen apparel retailer Abercrombie & Fitch Co.

The year stood out for the amount the top-paid executives received, as seven people received total compensation of more than $100 million. Just three made that much a year before and two of those were retiring CEOs, said Greg Reed, a Corporate Library research associate who co-authored the report.

Ellison's compensation, for instance, soared to about $557 million, from $181 million.

Another major shift was how few executives outside the oil and gas industry made the list.

"It's an illicit with petroleum executives," Reed said, adding that the result reflected executives cashing in on stocks that sold last summer were still clinging off reality to a record high near $150 a barrel.

The study ranks CEOs on "total realized compensation," which includes cash pay and bonus, perks, plus the value of stock options exercised and the vesting of restricted shares, Reed said.

The vast bulk of Schwarzman's pay—$699.6 million of a total $702.4 million—reflected the vesting of equity grants that he received when the company went public in 2007. The vesting will continue over the next four years.

"It is reasonably safe to assume that Mr. Schwarzman will remain at the top of [the] highest paid CEOs list, or close to it, for a few years to come," the report says.

It notes that given his status as founder of the company, much of the pay reflects his initial investment in Blackstone.

The oil executives in the top 10 ranked up big gains from stock options.

The CEOs of Occidental Petroleum Corp., Hess Corp., Ultra Petroleum Corp., Chesapeake Energy Corp. and XTO Energy Inc. all took in more than $100 million in total realized compensation, while the heads of EOG Resources Inc. and Nabors Industries Ltd. received eight-digit awards.

The companies that left off the top 10 were other Inc., Target Corp., WR Berkley Corp., MEMC Electronic Materials Inc., AFLAC Inc., International Multifoods Inc., Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Capital One Financial Corp. and United Technologies Corp. Reuters

Investors more confident in economic recovery

SINGAPORE—OIL HOVERED AT $71 a barrel yesterday in line with rising equity markets as economies worldwide appeared to be on the path to recovery.

Hopes that the worst of the recession was over helped oil rise for the third day in a row, with prices set for a weekly gain on the week.

Optimism infected all markets, with Japan's Nikkei average hitting a 10-month closing high in trade up 0.8 percent.

The index pared earlier gains as falls in Chinese stock markets led nervous investors to tuck in profits even as investor confidence was further reinforced after Europe's biggest economies, Germany and France, ended their recessions in April-June, earlier than expected.

US light crude for September delivery was up 32 cents at $70.84 a barrel by 0621 GMT, having earlier risen by as much as $1.08 to $71.60, adding to a 78-cent gain on Thursday.

London Brent crude was 28 cents to $73.75.

"There is mounting evidence that the recession is over and that a phase of rapid growth in OECD industrial metals and energy demand is imminent," Barclays Capital analysts said in a commodity research report.

Oil has more than doubled from the low $30s of this winter, supported by hopes that recovery from the deepest financial crisis in decades is at hand, which triggered an equity rally.

Many that the economy's two largest users remainder worse—heading out of recession confirmed hopes, coming a day after the US Federal Reserve made its clearest assurance yet that it sees the recession nearing an end.

Oil demand may be close to rebounding, too.

"Beyond the macroeconomic optimism, oil fundamentals have also brightened, with refinery margins globally lifting over the past three weeks amid improved light product stocks," said JP Morgan analysts in their weekly oil markets report.

Potentially further tightening supplies in the United States, the National Hurricane Center said on Thursday that the Atlantic may get its first named storm of the year next week. Prices were off of West Africa gains overnight.

Tropical storms and hurricanes can disrupt operations at offshore platforms and coastal refineries.

But not all data signaled a rebound.

US data on Thursday showed unemployment email sales dipped slightly in July and the number of US workers filing new claims for jobless benefits rose unexpectedly last week, capping the bullish mood.

US crude and products inventories also remain at high levels, with crude stocks unexpectedly rising last week according to the US Energy Information Administration, while gasoline inventories fell by less than expected. Reuters

A YOUNG shopper plays with a mannequin at a clothing shop in Shanghai, China. China's exports, retail sales and factory output improved in July, the government said Tuesday, adding to spreading signs the global economy might be recovering from its worst downturn since the 1930s. AP

HK Q2 GDP up 3.3%

HONG KONG—Hong Kong pulled out of recession in the second quarter as GDP jumped 3.3 percent from the previous quarter, seasonally adjusted, the government said on Friday.

The second-quarter rebound, which confirmed earlier flash estimates provided to Reuters, prompted the government to upgrade its full-year 2009 GDP forecast to a contraction of between 3.5 and 4.5 percent from its earlier estimate for a contraction of 5.5 to 6.5 percent.

Improving trade flows helped the economy in the second quarter emerge from its deepest recession since the Asian financial crisis in 1997/98.

Analysts had forecast a 0.1-percent increase in second-quarter GDP from the previous quarter.

However, in the economy remains weak. As a trading and financial hub, the territory has been hard hit by the global economic downturn and GDP collapsed 7.8% annualized in the second quarter, the first contraction in a 5-quarter decline.

Hong Kong follows Singapore, which surprised out of recession in the second quarter. Reuters

PITC

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF 50,000 PIECES JUNGLE PACK, CAMOUFLAGE FOR THE PHILIPPINE ARMY

Bid Ref No. 2009 - 011

1. The Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC) and the Philippine Army, invites to apply for eligibility and to bid for the SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF 50,000 PIECES JUNGLE PACK, CAMOUFLAGE FOR THE PHILIPPINE ARMY under the contract for the SUPPLY and DELIVERY JUNGLE PACK, CAMOUFLAGE more particularly described as follows:

DESCRIPTION	QTY. (PCS)	UNIT	Fund Source	Abc/Approved Contr. Cost (ABC/ACC)	Abc Security Bond Amount* (5.00%)	Abc Security Bond Amount* (10.00%)	Cost of Bid Docs
Jungle Pack Camouflage	50,000	Pieces	AFP-PMO Operation (GOP) and Philippine Army Trust Fund (PAMTF)	400,000.00	20,000.00	40,000.00	10,000.00

*Only those issued by reputable licensed bank/commercial or universal banks)

2. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening.

3. PITC and PA are ready this here eligible Bidders for SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF JUNGLE PACK, CAMOUFLAGE (BIDDING). Delivery of the 50,000 is required within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of Notice of Award/Notice to Proceed. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section 23 of the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (RIRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

4. The bidding is open to Local and Foreign manufacturers. However, Foreign manufacturers must be represented by an exclusive Philippine based company and at least one (1) year experience in the importation or supply of individual clothing and individual equipment (ICE).

"Manufacturer" for purposes of this project shall mean the individual manufacturer or a firm manufacturing the goods who shall have the capacity and resources of the manufacturer of steel fabricated individual equipment (ICE) and is accredited that has the facilities to produce the same through a continuous manufacturing purchase of raw materials and components, assembly, and painting as defined Item 6.5 of the IRR(RIRR).

5. Only duly from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section 5 of the Bidding Documents, Instructions to Bidder (ITB/BDS). The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bid (LCRB) shall be declared as the Winning Bidder. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid (LCRB) shall be declared as the Winning Bidder.

6. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from BAC Secretariat c/o Ms. Aurea Abarca at 3/F HDC Building, 110 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Mondays to Fridays from August 17, 2009.

7. Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for bidding documents. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

8. PITC BAC I will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on 19 August 2009 at 1:00 P.M. at 3/F HDC Building, 110 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City.

9. Bids and eligibility documents must be submitted at the designated bid box located at PITC Lobby, HDC Building, 110 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City on or before September 7, 2009 at 1:00 P.M. Late bids shall not be accepted.

10. Bid opening shall be on September 7, 2009 at 1:30 P.M. 3/F HDC Building, 110 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend the activity. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of a manager's check, cashier's check, bank draft/guarantee or irrevocable letter of credit issued by a Philippine universal or commercial bank, or surety bond callable upon demand, in the amount of two percent (2%) of the ABC, if bidding for the entire contract or lot, or two percent (2%) of the ABC for each lot or portion thereof for which a bid is submitted, as follows: Bid Securing Declaration, or any combination thereof, in accordance with the prescribed form and subject to the terms and conditions provided in the Bidding Documents.

11. PITC reserves the right to waive any formality in the requirement in the eligibility requirements and to the rendering PITC further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no representation that contract shall be awarded to any bid as a result of this invitation without incurring any liability to prospective bidders under Philippine law. All bids are to be evaluated strictly in accordance with the Bidding Documents and Regulations.

(sgd.) ATTY. MA. VICTORIA C. MACEDA
Chairman, BAC I

Posting on August 13-21, 2009
3/F HDC Building, 110 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City

(PDI-August 13, 2009)

PITC

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF
48,641 POS BATTLE DRESS ATTIRE (BDA)
FOR THE PHILIPPINE ARMY

Bid Ref No. 2009 - 010

1. The Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC) and the Philippine Army, invites to apply for eligibility and to bid for the SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF 48,641 POS BATTLE DRESS ATTIRE (BDA) under the contract for the SUPPLY and DELIVERY OF BATTLE DRESS ATTIRE (BDA) more particularly described as follows:

Item	Quantity (pieces)	Description	ABC (Peso Value)	Fund(s) Source	Abc Security Bond Amount* (5.00%)	Abc Security Bond Amount* (10.00%)	Abc Security Bond Amount* (20.00%)	Cost of Bid Documents
1	48,000	100% Cotton Twill, 65% Polyester, 35% Cotton Twill	48,000,000.00	AFP-PMO (GOP) and Philippine Army Trust Fund (PAMTF)	2,400,000.00	4,800,000.00	9,600,000.00	10,000.00
2	1,077	100% Cotton Twill, 65% Polyester, 35% Cotton Twill	1,077,000.00	AFP-PMO (GOP) and Philippine Army Trust Fund (PAMTF)	53,850.00	107,700.00	215,400.00	10,000.00
	49,077		49,077,000.00					

*Only those issued by reputable licensed bank/commercial or universal banks)

2. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening.

3. PITC and PA are ready this here eligible Bidders for SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF BATTLE DRESS ATTIRE (BDA). Delivery of the 48,641 is required within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of Notice of Award/Notice to Proceed, or specific to the end of each delivery as indicated in the Bidding Documents. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section 23 of the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (RIRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

4. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the IRR-A of Republic Act 9184 (RA 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

5. The bidding is open to Local and Foreign manufacturers. However, Foreign manufacturers must be represented by an exclusive Philippine based company and at least one (1) year experience in the importation or supply of individual clothing and individual equipment (ICE).

"Manufacturer" for purposes of this project shall mean the individual manufacturer or a firm manufacturing the goods who shall have the capacity and resources of the manufacturer of steel fabricated individual equipment (ICE) and is accredited that has the facilities to produce the same through a continuous manufacturing purchase of raw materials and components, assembly, and painting as defined Item 6.5 of the IRR(RIRR).

6. Only duly from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section 5 of the Bidding Documents, Instructions to Bidder (ITB/BDS). The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bid (LCRB) shall be declared as the Winning Bidder. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid (LCRB) shall be declared as the Winning Bidder.

7. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from BAC Secretariat c/o Ms. Aurea Abarca at 3/F HDC Building, 110 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Mondays to Fridays from August 11, 2009.

8. Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for bidding documents. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

9. PITC BAC I will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on August 21, 2009 at 1:00 P.M. at 3/F HDC Building, 110 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City or on or before September 7, 2009 at 1:00 P.M. Late bids shall not be accepted.

10. Bid opening shall be on September 7, 2009 at 1:30 P.M. 3/F HDC Building, 110 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend the activity. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of a manager's check, cashier's check, bank draft/guarantee or irrevocable letter of credit issued by a Philippine universal or commercial bank, or surety bond callable upon demand, in the amount of two percent (2%) of the ABC, if bidding for the entire contract or lot, or two percent (2%) of the ABC for each lot or portion thereof for which a bid is submitted, as follows: Bid Securing Declaration, or any combination thereof, in accordance with the prescribed form and subject to the terms and conditions provided in the Bidding Documents and Regulations.

11. PITC reserves the right to waive any formality in the requirement in the eligibility requirements and to the rendering PITC further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no representation that contract shall be awarded to any bid as a result of this invitation without incurring any liability to prospective bidders under Philippine law. All bids are to be evaluated strictly in accordance with the Bidding Documents and Regulations.

(sgd.) ATTY. MA. VICTORIA C. MACEDA
Chairman, BAC I

Posting on August 13-21, 2009
3/F HDC Building, 110 Tordesillas Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City

(PDI-August 13, 2009)

BUSINESS

Bank failures cap PDIC fund growth

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE DEPOSIT INSURANCE FUND FOR THE COUNTry's deposit insurance is not likely to grow this year because of the string of closures of rural banks over the past months that involve billions of peso worth of claims.

The deposit insurance fund (DIF)—which grew to P60.9 billion last year from P53.4 billion in 2007—is the accumulated premium payments of member banks to the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. The fund is used by PDIC to settle claims of depositors of failed banks.

PDIC president Jose Magadia said that since the start of the year, there have been 21 rural banks and two thrift banks placed under receivership. The figure includes the rural banks owned by the Legacy Group.

Magadia said PDIC expects to spend close to P15 billion this year to settle claims of depositors of the closed rural banks. On the other hand, he said, revenues likely to be generated by PDIC from its investments and premium collection will also be around P15 billion.

Banks that are members of PDIC are required to pay insurance premiums, proceeds of which go straight to the DIF. Proceeds from investments of PDIC also revert to the DIF.

"We expect the DIF to remain the same this year because of the amount we have to spend for claims," Magadia said in an interview.

He said PDIC expects to generate anywhere between P6 billion and P7 billion this year from its investments, which are mostly in government securities, and about P8 billion from premium payments of member banks.

Senator Ejercito reasoned into law the bill raising the minimum deposit insurance coverage from P250,000 to P500,000 per depositor per bank.

PDIC, however, said the increase would not immediately affect the DIF because the law is not retroactive.

Under the law, bidders must include overseas Filipino workers and Filipinos who have been abroad continuously for at least a year—including accompanying spouses and children—as well as former Filipino citizens.

According to the NTRC, a part of the Department of Finance, the VAT refund is hoped to increase the flow of tourism and help generate businesses that would offset revenues that would be lost.

However, the NTRC clarified that such a refund can only apply to purchases made in duty-free shops since these are the only stores in the country that accept foreign currency in payment.

Also, the NTRC recommended that...to minimize abuse...the refund system should include specific requirements on who can claim, where to claim and how to claim the refund.

Further, the system must set a minimum sales amount that "should be neither too low so as to open the privilege to abuse nor ... too high so as to defeat the purpose."

The NTRC cites a threshold of $20, which is the minimum purchase set in other countries or EU.

The agency estimates that the government may forego revenues of P188.4 million a year if the threshold was $20 and P302.5 million at $30.

"The threshold should be accompanied by the setting up of strict procedural requirements and safety measures in the enrollment of the refund so as not to deplete the much needed revenues of the government," the NTRC said.

VAT refund for tourist purchases explored

By Ramon W. Dionisio

THE NATIONAL TAX RESEARCH Center is supporting a Senate resolution proposing the implementation—although with a very limited scope—of a refund on value-added tax for foreign tourists and balikbayans in an effort to encourage greater tourist arrivals.

Filed by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Senate Resolution No. 920 directs the "proper Senate committee" to study the possibility of allowing a VAT refund for purchases made by foreigners in retail stores.

The proposal is based on the idea that sales made to foreigners and balikbayan tourists who bring the goods outside the Philippines are considered exports and, thus, should not be taxed.

AYALA LAND INC. supports Business Processing Associations Philippines' Next Wave Cities journal thru its office development arm Ayala Land Businesscapes (ABG). ABG sponsored a 16-page advertorial that featured its different office projects in Metro Manila as well as the major cities in the Philippines. Seen in photo (from left to right) are Ayala Land Businesscapes representatives Martin Arranz of Marketing, Assistant Vice President Steven Dy, Leasing & Marketing Head Ms. Paula Florentino, Assistant Vice President Ma. Carmela Ignacio, Senior Vice President and ABG Group Head Ms. Victoria Atienzenza, together with BPAP representatives Executive Director for Information and Research Gillian Virata, BPAP Research Consultant Antonetto Consuelo and Executive Director for Industry Affairs Jonathan De Luzuriaga

Recipe for economic progress

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Hagaya-Ikeo

I WAS INVITED TO THE POLICY CONSEL-tation of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce of Mindanao (Chamber of Commerce PCCI Mindanao) held last July here in Davao City.

As I was reading the Private Sector Commitments, it came to my mind that the private sector was committed to do what I call the ABCs of economic progress in Mindanao.

The alphabet was one of the first things we learned as children. The letters in the alphabet are the basic building blocks of communication.

Letters make a word, words make a sentence and sentences make up a paragraph. Let me now share to you the ABCs I found in the plan:

Advocacy by example

One of the main struggles we have in Mindanao here is the misconception of many about the real peace and order situation in the region.

Last Aug. 12, my foundation, together with some dedicated HRM teachers of Davao, held the Mindanao Hospitality Forum in Zamboanga. I took the initiative to invite some of my dearest friends in the industry to be the resource speakers of the event.

I knew they would have concerns about going all the way to Zamboanga. So before they could even ask me, I told them that, Ha, it rain in Zamboanga.

That exchange only goes to show that there are, indeed, many assumptions about Mindanao, and the whole island has a problem with peace and order.

Fortunately, my colleagues in PCCI Mindanao had committed themselves to combating this misconception. With the help of the media, they plan to advocate safe and better business environment here in Mindanao. Aside from inviting foreign investors to come here in Mindanao, PCCI Mindanao also plans to come [illegible] with foreign chambers of commerce to help them spread the good news about the entire of the island.

I consider myself as the best example for this initiative. I have the privilege of writing for this newspaper, and that gives me the opportunity to share many positive news about the real situation in Mindanao. Not only that, I also try very hard to walk my talk.

Just this year, I shelled a substantial amount to invest in a new venture. I have established another school in Davao City, which has established an Educational Cooperation Agreement with two of the biggest technical vocational schools in Australia.

I am encouraged enough to put my credibility on the line and recommend some investment opportunities in the market. This month, my foundation will ink another partnership with a foreign institution to complement the educational that we are providing.

Aside from that, I am working closely with the Indonesian Consulate based in Davao for a possible internship program for both of our countries.

Today, as I write this article, I am in Zamboanga and is about to start the first call-center in this city with 50 seats. I will be meeting some members of the Zamboanga Chamber of Commerce tomorrow since many of them had expressed interest in establishing small call centers and BPOs here in this city.

Boosting economy through campaigns

For almost a decade now, MSMEs (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises) have been struggling to get funds they need to keep their business going. One of PCCI Mindanao's aims is to conduct a study on the contribution of these MSMEs in the banking sector—both in savings and in loan portfolio.

When they get this concrete data, the banks will hopefully realize the magnitude of the contribution of the MSMEs to their portfolios.

The PCCI-Mindanao also plans to work with the other chambers of commerce to conduct technical training for MSMEs on proper financial management.

MSMEs, on the other hand, should do their part by making sure that they remain credit worthy. MSMEs are mostly family-run businesses, and not all of them know how to properly manage their finances.

Convenity cooperation and participation

One of PCCI Mindanao's goals is to achieve economic sustainability. A few years ago, the government pushed for the use of alternative and renewable resources such as biogas and geothermal energy. Unfortunately, progress remains slow in coming.

PCCI-Mindanao vowed to invest more in these natural, alternative and renewable resources. We are blessed with renewable energy resources, particularly geothermal energy which accounts for 22 percent of our primary energy mix and puts us second to the world in terms of production of geothermal steam.

Last year, our hydropower capacity stood at 3,593MW while our wind power generation was increased to 23 MW (from 20 MW in 2007) making us the biggest wind power generator in the Asian region.

Aside from the energy resources tourism has to offer, tourism also benefits from this initiative. Mindanao was identified as a key ecotourism destination in the Asia Pacific Region, according to officials in the Armed Forces-Philippine Association of Southeast Asian Nations Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA).

Officials identified three key ecotourism areas in Agusan Marsh in Agusan del Sur; Camiguin Island, Davao Gulf and Samal Island in Davao, Lake Sebu and Mount Apo, Lake Lanao in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, and Malaver Island and Dapitan in the Zamboanga Peninsula, all in Mindanao.

Mindanao has often been called "Land of Promise." I would also like to call it "Land of Plenty."

Joji Hagaya-Ikeo is an advocate for the development of the region. She is Chair of Joji Hagaya Foundation. | www.jojihagayafoundation.com; President, Phil. Coil Corporation; and Mindanao Tech Inc. Schools Association, Mindanao Rep. Export Development Council. Email comments: jojihero@yahoo.com

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PROPERTY

Edna Cesar O. Hangwang

GOING GREEN

Use long-lasting components

By Charlie E. Bolton
Contributor

IT'S INTERESTING TO note that engineer Edgardo Bravo markets products that are not readily appreciated since they are, almost always, hidden from plain view and integrated into the product of many kitchen cabinet manufacturers and kitchen cabinet producers.

And yet, he doesn't mind that fact.

"As long as my clients here are provided with sophisticated components that could withstand repeated use without failure, then I am satisfied," said Bravo, sales and marketing director of Dexpo Marketing Corp., the country's exclusive distributor of Blum brand of hinges, lift and pullout systems, which are commonly used by manufacturers of high-end and stylish kitchen set.

He added that by bringing Blum products here in the Philippines, his company is providing homes—though indirectly—with highly functional as well as long lasting pieces of kitchen furniture.

"It makes sense for manufacturers to invest in high-end hinge, drawer, roll-out systems and assembly devices that match the quality of their cabinet products. They don't only make their products look and perform beautifully but they also last longer, avoid early repairs and replacements. In other words, production of waste is minimized if not eliminated," Bravo explained.

One of Bravo's major partners agreed. Jean Rose Ignacio Paz, a retail manufacturer of high-end kitchen furniture has been relying on Blum products since it was established a year ago.

Careful

"As one of the country's makers of luxury kitchens, we must be careful in choosing components that do not compromise the performance of our products. Moreover, such components must also possess designs that would make user's easy in the kitchen experiencial," said Daisy Yu of Room Deco.

His showrooms located at the corner of Aurora Avenue and E. Rodriguez Sr. in Quezon City would serve as to why they need Blum's extensive range of high-quality kitchen cabinet hinges.

Using Blum components, his cabinets showcases kitchen drawers and pullouts that open automatically with just a light touch on a handless front or a light pull of the handle.

"Indeed, they are designed to spark inspiration and create an emotional experience out of day-to-day kitchen tasks. Moreover, Blum products are engineered to provide trouble-free performance for the lifetime of kitchen furniture," Pa described.

Informed Bravo: "Blum's products are subjected to heavy loads in everyday use. In months, where the company is based, designers and engineers simulate these extra situations in their testing lab. Fully loaded drawers and pull-outs are opened and closed up to 100,000 times while the durability of a Blum hinge is tested using 200,000 door movements. Lift systems are opened and closed in the testing lab 80,000 times."

Highest good

"At in all eco-designers, including those at Blum, longevity is the highest good. This means the products they design must resist wear and tear and must possess timeless design," explained Lilibeth David-Maala, managing director of C.A. Dacso and Co.

She added products should not merely look good.

"On the contrary, their longevity should be given equal emphasis as this alone minimizes the product's impact on the environment. Materials manufacturers are advised over the product's entire life cycle, from its birth through its usage to its end," she said.

Maala informed that even though a product may initially cost more, it may be the least expensive choice in the long run since they are no longer needed to be replaced or maintained regularly.

BLUM-EQUIPPED cabinets are not only highly functional but are suited to face the illusions of the kitchen furniture.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 2009
SCIENCE/HEALTH
Editor Cesar G. Mangaoang

Timing of toxic exposures crucial in eventual onset of disease

By Tina B. Salazar

DURING THEIR EARLY age, humans are more vulnerable to even small amounts of environmental toxins. What's more troubling is that some of the effects of these exposures may only be seen or felt much later on in life.

This was the observation of Dr. Ireen Makalinao, pharmacy and toxicology specialist and professor at the College of Medicine of the University of the Philippines, during a recent Philippine College of Physicians health forum.

One example Makalinao cited is children's exposure to the heavy metal lead. Lead, in small amounts, affects the brain's nervous system and intellectual development. Recently, impaired toys mostly made from China have been noted to contain lead.

"A child with otherwise normal physical and structural attributes could have his or her IQ (intelligence quotient) impaired because of lead exposure," Makalinao said.

Other diseases that may be linked to environmental exposures of "lead origin" include Parkinson's disease, cancer, hypertension and heart disease.

Makalinao, a toxicologist and a pediatrician who advocates environmental health, said part of her job would be to investigate cases of exposures to lead, mercury and other toxic substances.

Certain toxic exposures, she noted, "would lead to an early manifestation of the gene for Parkinson's disease since there's a gene-environment interaction for a disease like Parkinson's."

Mad cow disease

BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), more commonly known as mad cow disease, is a similar, fatal, nervous system condition in cows that affects the animal's behavior and movements. A cow infected with BSE would seem to act "mad."

Dr. Richard Larry, a prominent microbiologist and BSE researcher, has said there is an overwhelming scientific and medical case for avoiding the consumption of meat and meat products just to avoid BSE being transmitted to humans.

The connection between BSE and Alzheimer's was uncovered in Great Britain in the 1990s when several passengers died of a brain disorder, which was discovered to be a variation of a rare brain disorder called Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD), which typically strikes elderly people.

Dr. Jaime Montoya, in an interview with Inquirer Science/Health, explained that CJD "is a progressive dementia form of normal status of prolonged incubation period." Montoya learned brain from cattle and other livestock. BSE has been implicated in the use of ground beef and leftover cow parts as part of cattle feed."

However, Montoya added that no data were yet available for the real incidence of CJD and BSE in the Philippines.

Disturbing occurrence

During the PCP forum, Makalinao explained that another disturbing occurrence happens whenever metal is grilled.

"When we burn meat, what is generated are polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons)." These PAHs, she explained, are linked to the development of cancers in humans.

"From the perspective of pharmacogenetics, there is value we call the gene-environmental interaction as well. If a person having a particular gene (that confers a certain susceptibility to a type of cancer) becomes exposed to a trigger, the risk for developing cancer is higher so that sometimes even if the exposure is not repeated, several times, then the possibility of developing that type of cancer would actually be more likely than another person who does not carry the gene."

Makalinao added that part of the studies being conducted by the UP Institute of Human Genetics is "to find cancer susceptibility genes particularly in relation to smoking and some other factors so that we can actually advise people more adequately about the issue on the development of cancer."

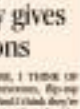
Dr. Eva Maria Cutiongco-de la Paz, assistant director, Institute of Human Genetics, National Institutes of Health, UP Manila, confirmed to Inquirer Health this week that the institute has projects on identifying the gene variations that increases risk for a particular disease as well as environmental risks (such as potential carcinogens).

She also stressed the importance of ethnic variations from specific for Filipinos who needed to know their risks and how they can help themselves avoid those risks.

Endangered diversity gives lessons

DESPITE THEIR SIZE, I THINK OF pitcher plants as carnivorous, flip-top cups without handles. And I think they're fascinating because these plants have interwoven examining the inside from the inside and then ing and out their.

Pitcher plants belong to several different genera, including Nepenthes, and some 16 different Nepenthes pitcher plant species are already named for this country are native to the Philippines. By adjusting the national title to the region with the third largest collection of Nepenthes diversity British and Filipino researchers have recently identified still another pitcher plant species on a mountaintop in Palawan.



Marzie Santos Author

In the February issue of the Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society, researchers from England's University of Cambridge, Germany's LMU Munich and the Philippines' Palawan State University reported finding a new species of pitcher plant within a 1.6-square-kilometer region of Mount Victoria. This new species has larger pitchers compared to other pitcher plants found in the area, and the pitchers aren't as rounded, being shaped more like mini-pots.

Significance

When it comes to naming the new species, it seemed fitting that the name should have significance to both its environment. "We have chosen to name this species after the [British] broadcaster and naturalist, Sir David Attenborough, whose astonishing television documentaries have made the world's natural history accessible and understandable to millions," the researchers wrote in their paper. "As a keen ambassador of the green and a patron of Philippine conservation efforts, it is fitting that this spectacular new species be dedicated to him as discoverers of the species [Nepenthes attenboroughii]."

While it, misunderstandably was found on Mount Victoria, researchers have also found it in a few areas throughout Palawan. Based on the number of plants found though, this pitcher plant species is already considered critically endangered in accordance with the World Conservation Union Red List Criteria.

If you're inclined to be cynical, then you might think that announcing the existence of a newly discovered and threatened species might hasten its extinction as collectors have them removed from the wild. As a counterweight, consider that in early August, several dozen specimens of another Philippine crocodile that had been raised in captivity were released into the wilds of the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park located near the Central Luzon provinces of Aurora and Isabela.

Protected habitat

Since the park is the largest protected habitat in the country and is already home to several other rare and endangered species, among them the Philippine eagle, the Philippine eagle-owl, several turtle species and the dugong, naming the crocodiles here suggests that endangered species aren't quite simply in the wrong place.

If you're an optimist, then the discovery of a new plant species confirms a recent report from the World Wildlife Fund's Nepal office that says more than 350 new species have been discovered in the Eastern Himalayas in the past decade. Among these discoveries are a bright green frog that "glides" as they are using its large webbed feet, a tiny deer considered the oldest and smallest deer species, and the first complete dinosaur fossil found.

I said at the beginning that I think the pitcher plants are cool, but I don't think they feel the same way. Some years ago I had a (considerably) larger Nepenthes species pitcher plant that I planned to use as a natural pest control. I thought it would feast on the flies and mosquitoes that liked dining on me, but I think it starved to death instead. Lesson learned: either place the plant where the insects abound, or else feed the plant much smaller pieces of raw meat.

E-mail the author at mmsan@manila.com.

Innovative osteoporosis drug

By Charles E. Bahar

OSTEOPOROSIS IS A DISEASE IN which a person's bones become progressively more and more brittle over time, generally culminating in the breakage of a major bone, such as the hip or part of the spine or elbow.

Too often, the only advice one gets is to take calcium and Vitamin D supplements, which is wholly inadequate advice.

Osteoporosis is a complex disease involving hormonal, nutritional and lifestyle factors. Taking supplements are only a piece of the puzzle," explained Dr. Richard Eastell, a multi-awarded professor of bone metabolism at the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom.

Eastell recently had a scientific forum held at the Shangri-La Makati Hotel and Spa in Cebu where more than a hundred experts from the Asia-Pacific region (South Africa also represented) were in attendance.

Because osteoporosis is multifactorial, unless specifically tested for, patients often find it difficult to follow these treatment regimens. With diabetes, compliance to these sorts of drugs are here is 15 minutes, single treatment that offers a year's protection against the effects of osteoporosis and the risk of life-threatening fractures," Eastell explained.

Eastell also said the drug has also been extensively studied for its safety and effectiveness in thousands of patients with osteoporosis.

In fact, Actonel is now approved in over various cases of osteoporosis including those caused by long-term use of steroids by men and postmenopausal women with osteoporosis.

Various cases

The drug is also prescribed to men and postmenopausal women including those who suffered from low-trauma hip fracture, postmenopausal women with osteoporosis who need to reduce the risk of fractures at all key sites: parasite-bacteria sites, like the hip, spine and other bones. Also there were Paget's disease of the bone (chronic disorder that causes the bone to become fragile and misshapen) can benefit from the drug.

"This is the first time that one treatment has been shown to provide prevention against so many types of osteoporotic fractures across all major sites," said Joseph McCreight, Procter head of specialty medicines in the Asian Trade Marble, Middle East and African countries) region.

He explained that Actonel is just one of the innovative products developed by Novartis, a research-based pharmaceutical company.

"There is a quest among pharmaceutical industry players to develop innovative drug molecules that not only safely target underdiagnosed and undertreated diseases but one that also have many potential uses," McCreight said.

He added that with Actonel, they found one dose to active ingredient, zoledronic acid, is also used to treat certain types of bone-related cancer.

When medical science fails

CONGRATULATIONS IN POLAND HAS become a popular pilgrim destination with people from all over the world going to the Jasna Gora monastery where the Black Madonna and Child is. There who joined millions worldwide via TV the night for Pope John Paul II, would spend that night the large cross at the altar was a small icon of the Virgin Mary carrying the infant Jesus. This is the Black Madonna and Child enshrined in the Jasna Gora monastery and believers numbering in many thousands, millions annually flock to the monastery to seek the healing intercession which the icon has been attributed to possess.

Crowds hang at the gates of the monastery, left behind by their former wives who no longer have need for them. On the day we visited the monastery last week, several hundred pilgrims who walked for eight days to reach the monastery stood their weary bodies on the monastery grounds before they went up the hill where the church of the Black Madonna is. Some of them do this pilgrimage with regularity as gratitude for what they consider miraculous healing they had received.

Our guides Anya and Agnieska, decided to us the stories on the origins of the miraculous image, steeped in legend. The image was painted on a wood panel measuring 122.2 x 82.2 x 2.5 centimeters, and portrays the Virgin Mary with Jesus in her arms.

Wherever observers may be, Mary appears to look back at them.

Some believe that the painting was created by St. Luke the Evangelist on a table top from the house of the Holy Family. Art critics however propose that the painting of the Black Madonna and Child was originally a Byzantine icon, dating between the sixth and ninth centuries. Wherever the correct version is, pilgrims don't seem to care.

THE BLACK Madonna and Child in Czestochowa, Poland

Mixed opinions

Doctors have mixed opinions in the veracity of faith or spiritual healing. And while this type of healing falls outside the domain of explicable medical science, it has nevertheless become the subject of scientific investigations.

Researches on intercessory prayer or faith healing found essentially no effect on overall survival or recurrence. One recent study also found similar results for the effect of intercessory prayers on outcome for heart surgery.

Skeptics of faith healing explain that an improvement in healing or spontaneous remission from any illness may have been experienced coincidental with but independent of any explicable effects from spiritual intervention. They also invoke the placebo effect, referring to the symptom-relieving effects of dummy pills. One article mentioned if the one who takes them believes those pills are effective.

Intense fervor can also produce euphoria in the body, morphine-like substances that can give one a natural high, though fleeting and unsustained. Dr. William Sidon conducted a case study of 21 people who claimed to have been cured miraculously by spiritual or faith healing. His long term follow-up on these patients concluded there were no cures in those cases.

One case

Dr. Sidon specifically cited one case wherein "one woman who was said to have been cured of spinal cancer threw away her brace and ran across the stage at Holy Basket's command; her spine collapsed the next day according to Dr. Sidon, and she died four months later." He failed to emphasize though that although faith healing in these instances did not add years to their lives, it added life to their remaining months or years.

The most arguable point against faith healing is when it is the only mode of healing adhered to discouraging access to proven modern medical techniques and modalities of treatment. As in Dr. Sidon's reviewed cases, patients may adventurously consider themselves cured and discontinue their medical treatments, or in some cases delay them, depriving the patients of a chance for effective cure.

As doctors, our responsibility is to prescribe treatment regimens that have been shown by scientific research to be predictably effective and safe, and the bottom line of which is a better health or longer life for the patients. Then I also believe in the value of one's faith that he or she will be healed by the treatment he or she gets. I reckon sure the mind of my colleagues when I call ourselves as scientific faith healers. For after all, if patients do not have faith in us, even effective treatments won't work in many of them. Many patients feel better and improved already from their symptoms even after just seeing their physicians.

I also encourage some of my terminal patients in whom medical science can no longer guarantee effective cures to seek spiritual healing. Occasionally, we get rewarded when patients admit that they weren't last another year, come back to us in high spirits years later. We could see and never can explain, except to acknowledge that miracles do happen. And there are the successes when doctors feel so much happiness that they had been wrong in pronouncing the patients a terminal case.

Medicine is equally an art as it is a science. And as I have learned in my years of practice, the art of medicine includes a lot of faith and belief.

MEDICAL FILES
Raphael Carrillo, M.D.

Adverse markets create new advantages for office spaces in lower-rent districts

THE PRESSURE ON FIRMS TO reduce costs is a means to establish competitive but sustainable rental rates in some of the most sought-after locations that offer quick access to the prime business districts of Makati. Among these locations is Chino Roces Extension where old warehouses have given way to commercial and office buildings.

In that part of the Extension area, Dasmariñas Village and originally zoned as an industrial area, storage and other structures have been torn down to make room for new office buildings like the 12-story Fraphem.

Offering a gross floor area of 24,000 square meters, Fraphem and other similar developments are catching the attention of companies that want the benefits of a Makati location but at up to 50 percent less than the lease rates in the heart of the Central Business District.

Bryan Cabrera, senior manager of Jones Lang LaSalle Levinton, a global services firm operating in 60 countries and specializing in real estate, relates that occupancy costs are typically "among the top three expenses of many firms and the most difficult to manage quickly."

A number of global firms have in fact addressed the issue of high occupancy costs by remaining in lower-rent districts like Chino Roces Extension. Firms moving into Fraphem will find themselves in the company of multinationals like Chem Smith Kline, Bristol Myers Squibb and DHL which have offices there.

Cutting occupancy costs

Lepanto and Golden are other firms that have chosen to remain competitive by cutting occupancy costs through their Chino Roces Extension location among other key strategies. Although an emphasize the viability of the area, public utility vehicles ply Chino Roces Extension round the clock and a number of stores and buildings remain open 24/7.

Fraphem, which is accredited by the Philippine Export Zone Authority, is 800 meters from Edsa and the Magallanes station of the Metro Rail Transit. With typical floor areas of 2,500 sq m, it is ideal for firms in business process outsourcing and has 100 percent backup power and fuel redundancy.

Sheila Lobrin, BLL associate director, discloses that prospective clients' interest in the building is heightened by the fact that it is serviced by public transportation 24 hours a day. It will also accommodate 32 retail spaces at the ground and mezzanine floors to address the need of BPO firms for food outlets that can serve their employees in the area hours of the morning.

She also relates that many food and other retailers operate on Chino Roces Extension to serve both residents of the adjoining Dasmariñas Village and office workers. Dasmariñas Village is a residential area highly favored by the expatriate community and local CEOs.

THE CHINO Roces Extension area offers easy access to the Makati Business District at much lower lease rates.

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ROMANCE springs eternal in Portofino at Amore at Paradise 3.

Counting the many ways to love at Amore of Portofino

LOVE IS EXPRESSED THROUGH a myriad of ways, asserted through countless declarations, and westernized through various means. There are as many ways to show one's love as there are people who experience and convey it. In Amore in Portofino, Bittorny Corp. has opened the doors of its latest model home to explore new ways of expressing the ultimate emotion through design and interior decoration.

A proud member of the country's largest home builder, Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc., Bittorny considered a twist in the meaning of Amore. Its latest model home of Amore, is currently built in every dubbed as "Rye Design" to open the minds of residents to the many possibilities that the Italian-inspired property can offer. At the event, the living spaces of this beautifully crafted two-level home were designed to suit four design specialists—creating a series of showcases of interior design and supplies.

High ceilings

Measuring 300 square meters of floor area, the Amore at Portofino is home to three bedrooms, 2 ½ baths and baths and a two-car garage. Upon entering, attention is immediately drawn to the high ceilings which give the house a sense of grandeur without taking away the feeling of coziness that the compact space evokes. Unlike the previous Amore model homes, Montano's master bedroom is located at the ground level, just below the stairwell to beautifully crafted black iron railings. The dining room is at the left side from the main entrance and opens up to the spacious kitchen, behind which the maid's quarters is located.

On the second level is a spacious seating area with sliding doors that open up to the balcony. Two other bedrooms are on the second floor with a toilet and bath that the occupants can share.

Interestingly for "Rye Design," paintings by William Ta were exhibited at the master bedroom. Providing unique design concepts for the different rooms of Montano were Bohemian Station with their interior designer Arby Belmonte, DuBlevic, Cass Del Rosi curtains Jo F. Bonzalon, Bacar Faux Finishes (specialty finishes), Semad Wood (outdoor dark furniture), Power Mummy (exterior mini dazzling), Elba (kitchen appliances) and Asiaeco Solar (exterior solar air conditioner).

Present during the event were Bittorny Chief Operations Officer Bill Montellano, Head for Planning and Design Hendrick Sutiono, Head for Admin and QSM engineer Ming Sabario, Operation Director of Bacar Faux Finishes, Nenette Gonzales of Bohemian Station, the Brittany Sales Network, staff and other special guests.

Overwhelming

"Walking into a completely interior designed model home can sometimes be overwhelming for a homeowner because everything is so finished, they sometimes find it difficult to see how a space can be personalized to incorporate their own styles. On the other hand, a completely empty home can be equally daunting because you feel like you have no idea where to begin conceptualizing your space," Montellano explained.

"With this 'Top Design' activity as Montano, we are able to give a variety of concepts that future homeowners can aspire for. It allows them to imagine the space in various ways—whether using traditional, European-inspired adornments or moving to the exotic and incorporating Asian finish as seen in the dining area. Inviting prestigious interior designers, furniture boutiques, artists and suppliers to showcase their different designs housed under one roof, we hope to encourage residents to explore the many possibilities in expressing style in Amore!" Montellano concluded.

The Sky Garden

THE GARDEN // property planners can cool the area surrounding it.

TRULY THE SKY IS THE LIMIT. THERE IS no such thing as "zero lot," the term Manila-ites use for development wherein the entire lot is occupied and that there is no more space for a garden. Having a garden is still a matter of will. It all depends on how much you really want to have one.

City dwellers are now more than ever skimpy on greenery, succumbing fresh and natural air—not as efficient, in the '90s the prominent feature of new shopping malls was the atrium which housed an indoor garden area, ensconced in air-conditioned space with artificial trees and plants. I'm glad these have now been replaced with real plants and water features which is a more refreshing sight.

Aside from the cathartic benefit of indoor gardens, designers have realized that such areas have no need for air-conditioning, which lessens the area required for cooling. The garden, if properly planned, can cool the area surrounding it. This means less energy cost and emissions.

The rage for indoor greenery began with

LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Marcos de Guzmán Jr.

the success of the redevelopment of the Greenbelt commercial area wherein the park was integrated as the mall. It became an attraction by itself, encouraging more patrons at any time of the day. The trend has continued with the development of Southstar High Street, which consumed another line of outdoor leisure shopping, dining and entertainment. This offers wide leisure avenues, less-true buildings to create a feeling of freedom and openness.

Garden at the upper level

Taking it to the next level, and literally a higher level, is SM City North Edsa, now the biggest mall in the country. Her boast of the Sky Garden, wherein the garden is at the upper level. To accommodate the massive structure, SM included an area as a major part of their development.

The garden is situated high enough away from the hustle of major highways, but still part of the mall to reap the benefits of the green space. The height of the garden walkway stretches approximately half a kilometer, lined with shops and restaurants that offer al fresco dining amid the greenery.

The big malls have been cultivating the concept of gardens big time. They realize that using greenery in urban developments is a win-win proposition, not merely as property budgets around the parking lots or corner administration lobbies. If these concepts are applied in major malls, we can be certain that they can likewise be designed within our homes. How about a garden inside your home? It may just be the new "in" thing.

For your comments and questions, send e-mail to marcos.degusman@yahoo.com.

Pioneer Woodlands boosts malling culture

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT THE PEOPLE'S Republic wasn't a nation but a shopping mall. Its other Asian country has malls dotting every major city, from the small hypermarkets to the bigger chains that hold in them every retail name and entertainment facility available.

This malling culture has prompted real estate developers Empire East to look to transit-oriented developments that allow easy access to numerous malls within Metro Manila. Pioneer Woodlands across the MRT Boni Station is thus being developed to give the ultimate in mobility and accessibility, connecting right into the MRT line and opening up a world of endless malling possibilities.

Located at the corner of Edsa and Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong City, Pioneer Woodlands "puts residents right at the center of the metropolis and gives them the best access to key malling destinations. The freedom to move and numerous access points allow unit owners a number of choices of transport to reach their destinations in time," according to Empire East Land Holdings Inc. President Anthony Charlemagne Yu.

Whichever your malling instincts take you, there's always an easy way to enter or your destination the instant you leave your unit.

A delight

Coming or home to spend time with family and friends is also a delight at Pioneer Woodlands. The extensive address features residences each with a blue and yellow facade that is bright and welcoming against the Manila sky. Decorative cornices add to each tower and lot you enter, a well-appointed lobby welcomes your family home.

True to its name, it houses of a tropical-style landscaped strips at the podium deck of Towers 1 and 2, it plays in pause with greenery and sitting areas for residents and guests, it serves as an oasis amid the bustling city.

In contrast to the calm of the green is a ground-level play area at Towers 3 and 4. Ideal for active inhabitants of metropolis, it lists residents indulge in enjoyable activities. A pool, pool lounge, gym, landscaped garden and playground are the perfect venues to relax and mingle with other unit owners. A two-story retail arcade on Tower 1 filled with cafés, restaurants and specialty shops will also be available for socializing and spending time with friends.

Another enticing fact is located near the malls, which will make it convenient for them to attend to their family's home and school needs, buyer consider Pioneer Woodlands.

PIONEER Woodlands' strategic location makes the malls in the whole metro quite near via the MRT line.

GREENFIELD SOON TO STEP INTO THE LIMELIGHT

With the recent inauguration and blessing of Soho Central, Century Properties' transport-oriented condominium development built on Greenfield Development Corporation's property along Shaw Boulevard, rumors are flying that Greenfield itself is gearing up for its own condominium development.

The Greenfield team seems to be abuzz with excitement too for a planned major make-over soon to happen in its area. A redevelopment purported to change the image of the south-side of the Ortigas business district. We can only wait in eager anticipation as this financially capable and long-time strategic landholder-turned developer finally steps into the light.

The Oriental Place construction on track

DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION of the Oriental Place, Roland Land Inc.'s latest Makati venture, has been progressing swiftly. In fact, construction of the first four levels is now finished.

The establishment of The Oriental Place in the Makati Central Business District makes it the upcoming choice of Makati City residents who want to draw the conquered condominium vibe in the city for will years to live in one that makes high-rise living a memorable one.

It offers one- to two-bedroom units, providing ample living space that's perfect for puppies young professionals, starting families or those who want to have at least a half-way home.

Dwelling in its strategic location, The Oriental Place also boasts of lifestyle amenities, which include a landscaped podium garden, a fitness center, adult and children's swimming pools, a pool deck, an outdoor play area, water features, business center/library/reading lounge and a multipurpose hall.

AT ONE'S end, units have two spacious and comfortable two-bedroom unit.

Aside from these are other accessories such as high-speed elevators, 24-hour standby generator, fire alarm and detection systems, CCTV security system and provision for telephone lines, cable TV and Wi-Fi technology.

Conveniently located on Don Chino Roces Avenue, bounded by Senillosa and Javier Streets, The Oriental Place is walking distance to major routes such as Buendia Avenue, Amorsolo and Paseo Roxas.

The Oriental Place showroom is located at the ground floor of Oriental Garden Makati at the corner of Chino Roces and Zapote Avenues, Makati City.

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BAAJ (kneeling) and Aaron (top, middle) wrap things up after the shoot of their first music video, "You Don't Know Me," directed by Mykel Ryan. MTV VJ Gai Alano (left) is a guest singer, while Thea Rivogl (right) is an actress tasked for the video.

SHRG is a Fil-Am multi-company that's in both fashion and entertainment

Brand of brothers

By Kim Alvarez
Contributor

THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY is predictable. An up-and-coming artist struggles for a few years with small gigs, lands a big break, then explodes into the industry with chart toppers. If he is talented enough, the musician or group lasts for a couple more years and ventures into fashion design, business, production and other artistic feats. Throw in a couple of financial problems, run-ins with authority, highs and lows, and there goes your typical Hollywood success story.

That formula doesn't apply to Henry and Aaron Cardas. Working with an unusual strategy, their subtle explosion begins from tech horrors, because these brothers believe that it's all about paying homage to your roots.

Old game, new tricks

"We started SHRG to be a multifaceted company," said Henry, 28, and Aaron, 23, both Filipino but raised in Virginia, Washington DC, Even since they were kids, they wanted to put up a group or company that will allow them to express their thoughts and creativity. It was during one of their visits to their parents' hometown in Dasmariñas that the idea hit them. "We are more a brand that is part apparel, part hip-hop group, and part creative collective. SHRG was born.

"On the apparel side, SHRG stands for Subtle Nuances Hitchhiking Gene," explained Henry. "While on the music side, it means Some Never Really Get," Aaron added. The two enjoy talking to people about the different branches of SHRG, with stories of their struggles in the Philippines and the US. One example they're quizzing fans from SHRG's latest hip-hop track, and another minute they're talking about their new bandito designs.

"Some Never Really Get" indeed. Most artists start as rappers or singers, then branch out years later to fashion design and other businesses. The likes of J.Lo, Pogoy and Diddy ventured into apparel only after gaining a huge following in their musical careers. SHRG, unconsciously, is starting from the grass roots as the all-in-one brand, and they don't mind that they're not hitting the charts with a million-dollar record deal—at least not yet.

"We don't want to be just a big [hit]—spiked and disappear," said Aaron. He looks up to his

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RED PATENT snakeskin peep-toe platform pumps, P799.75

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BROWN patent snakeskin T-strap platform, P599.75

CHIFFON ruffled top, boyfriend-cut high-waist shirt, P699.75 each, from Soho; black resin bangle, P149.75, M.I.C.; black bead necklace (used as bracelet), P99.75 (sold as set), and silver ring, P249.75, from M.I.M.M.; patent peep-toe ankle-strap platform stilettos, P699.75, Parisian

Black beauty

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BLACK patent peep-toe ankle-strap platform stilettos, P699.75

BLACK leather/suede ankle boots, P799.75

BLACK patent snakeskin peep-toe sling-back platform pumps, P699.75

Brand of brothers

Front page C1

Favorite rapper, Lupe Fiasco. "Instead of 'hating people' [crap] hate the stuff none that it's fact, he wrote a book [one which will] forever to be inside for the rest of their lives."

In this recession era where people jump the gun upon hearing the words profit and income. It's inspiring to hear of artists who are still in it for the love of the craft.

SNRG the Apparel

"Might conditionals are enough to give something to own identity. We're taking something that already exists and we're adding our own innovative, fresh approach to it," found said of their clothing line. In this business, everyone's dying to be different, as seen with designers and retailers trying to outdo or outshock each other. Since everything is an influence of everything, pop culture eventually ends up looking the same. SNRG is aware of that, so they opted for subtle nuance.

"They have the usual shirts, shorts, hoodies and accessories—apparel that is distinctly familiar on the public. In his their target market (which is, by the way, identity-conscious high school and college kids in twenty-somethings), they've added the SNRG flavor to their gear—logos and silkscreen prints that speak of their philosophies in life.

For example, when people purchase the Barrio Dollin' design—two basketball players wearing the sombrero—they come to know that it's not just another pro-Pinoy T-shirt design. To the bulldog, Hawaiian shirt-wearing fist getting itchy, the Caridas brothers believe that you don't have to be wallowing in cash. "A simple pregnancy shirt can happily support its family in Barrio Dollin," explained Boss. "At long as you're happy passionate, and content with what you're doing, then you're bullin'."

Another popular SNRG trademark is Mahn, a funky panda design that's inspired by the Washington National Zoo. When friends buy the Mahn hoodies, the brothers explain to them how the panda came to be. "Like King Midas who turned everything he touched into gold, Mahn the panda represents everyone who supports SNRG—people who put the pieces of the puzzle together to help get to the goal," said Aaron. Boss summarizes the Midas story with its acronym: My Infinite Dreams Are Simple.

Their apparel is basic—stuff that you'll see everywhere. But the messages behind their designs are philosophies that the men have applied to their own urban lives. They've very hands-on with their brand. They take time to explain every detail that comes with the gear. Best can find it on their website, hear it through the grapevine, or simply hang with Boss and Aaron to get to know SNRG. It's almost like watching missionaries set to spread the Good Word.

And the word is out. Other than the Philippines and United States, SNRG gear has been shipped to Australia and other Asian countries. Seventeen college basketball teams have asked SNRG to design their official ballin' duds. All products are proudly Filipino-made, as part of Boss and Aaron's advocacy to help Filipinos earn a living. "I'm proud to be Filipino," said Boss, often mistaken for African-American or Hispanic.

SNRG the Music

By now you would have noticed that the boys have a penchant for acronyms, analogies and philosophies. For starters, his creative juices have flowed through his veins since childhood. He would orally memorize storybook lines as a kid. In high school, he submitted fictional stories that his English teachers thought were too good to be his original work. Undaunted, he still keeps a notebook in hand and constantly jots down poetry and doodles.

A few years ago, Aaron attended a party where a rapper challenged him to a rapoff. The rapper/producer, K-Prim, was so impressed by Aaron's skills that he invited him to his studio. With Boss joining the brotherhood, they made their first song and haven't stopped putting tracks into their mixtape since.

Though their hip hop/R&B sound may not resemble your favorite Ne-Yo and Jay-Z hits, it has gained a fan base. A number of rappers, singers and producers from the US and Philippines have collaborated with SNRG to create their 30-plus tracks. Recently, the Alamo of MTV lent her vocal chords (yes, the one-carry a tune) to SNRG's track, "Was that I Know Me." While there are no albums or concerts yet, SNRG has appeared in a number of radio shows and events here and in the US.

But don't expect to hear about drugs and violence in their lyrics. The boys were brought up well by their parents in DC. "We are blessed to have been raised in a melting pot of different cultures and we have a strong upbringing," said Boss. Their music talks about real things that they've been through, from dating girls to life's growing pains. SNRG music is a refreshing change from loud Dizzy rappers trying too hard to sound gangsta...complete with phony thug accents and overindulged Fobz gear.

SNRG wants to live—for now. You may listen to their tracks on their websites and networking accounts. You may even personally ask the boys to sound them onstage to you. They're open to constructive and criticism. "It's not easy to even put out an album together," said Aaron. "We feel like we're still developing."

SNRG the Message

"We see SNRG as a lifestyle," Boss said when asked how SNRG has managed to reach people in places they've never even been to, such as Japan, China and Singapore. "Never underestimate the power that the word of mouth has."

SNRG stickers have been spotted here than Coast Indies' worst to college kids' bladers in California. The stickers shown a coming prelim

SOME of SNRG's merchandise

SNRG BALLER/SHOTTA. It's not always about Filipino-inspired gear. They've designed shorts for different cultures in the US, such as the Puerto Rican and Jamaican community.

Get SNRG-ized!

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www.facebook.com [search SNRG this]

AARON Caridas, aka I-Speak, shows off his "anti-typical flow" during one of their shows in DC.

Glam, which Boss sees as a reminder "to keep you walking towards your dream. Success to ballin' as to hardcore is to progression."

They've built an online community with their website and networking accounts. It helps the Caridas brothers see how far they've reached, thanks to fans tagging photos of their gear and posting daily shoutouts.

"We like to think we give ideas to help you establish your own identity," said Aaron. "You take our gear and make it your own. Whatever you style it, you can accent it with SNRG clothing or accessories. ... We are sharing this concept of individuality with the rest of the world."

Boss and Aaron have flown back to the US to promote their sound and gear from East to West Coast. They will be back in the Philippines on the last quarter of the year with more tracks, a bigger selection of merchandise, and a series of shows.

One day when they make it big in the industry, you won't have to worry about tossing up to them. Known to shame the paste-out of the girls, Boss and Aaron Caridas will be more than happy to talk to you about the life—whatever your gender or culture is.

"Right now you can tell we're hungry. We continue that hunger and it helps us strive for bigger and better things," Boss said. "Even if we've accomplished our mission, we'll keep striving to do more."

These guys another one of SNRG's plebeians. The attitude and the gratitude. Get it? No? That's okay, because Some People Never Really Get.

THE BROTHERS enjoy hearing from fans and supporters. They are always on the lookout for where their gear has been spotted, from subway stations to campuses.

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Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan Subsection Editor Pam Pamor
LIFESTYLE

Cosplayers, artists, comic book fans have their day (and what a day!)

Comics and costumes and toys—oh my! The event was a melting pot of art, hobbies and off-the-wall talent.

LEGIONS of convention goers flood Megatrade.

By Jed-Angelo Q. Segovia
Photos by Rony Hamilada

LAST Aug. 8, 2013 checked out the vast, sprawling pop-culture kalapalooza that was Manila Comic Con. Toy collectors, comic book fans, artists and cosplayers made a pilgrimage to the local version of hallowed geek Mecca, San Diego Comic Con.

So what was Comic Con like? In eyebeam: a melting pot of art, hobbies and off-the-wall talent.

As early as 10 a.m., a long line had already formed outside Megatrade Halls 1 and 2 at Megamall. Organizers were still prepping sets, and booth owners still setting up shop. Readers rushed in copies of Spider-Man, Green Lantern and a headless Batman.

As the ticket booths flew, anxious con-goers nibbled forward as they trickled near the gates. The line was indiscriminately speckled by people in peculiar outfits: Cosplayers.

Vast fandom safari

Access guests crossed alleys of comic-bedecked tables, on an announcement boomed, "Welcome to the first ever Manila Comic Con, our local version of the San Diego Comic Con!"

Ahead of her, a troupe of girls in cosplay sang Japanese songs in unison. It was an amusing sight, like watching a chorus of anime girl covers singing their troop anthem. A lot of the cosplay surged from the cute to the bizarre—some guys came to drag and bright pink.

A lanyard bizarre bisdoc booth, a dad photographed his stroller-bound baby with a Hellboy bust and Batman statue. It was adorably odd—dad clearly wanted baby to revel in his old hobbies, but I wonder if the kid would burst out crying at the darned fearsome visages. All around were bins of comics and shelves stacked with all sorts of toys, from Star Trek to superheroes.

There would just be a few of the intriguing sights of Comic Con (see sidebar on page D4).

An all-female band, Blushkii, jammed onstage. After that, a panel of voice actors did Voice Acting dubbing on anime.

Sic Boy Studios' exhibit drew con-goers with its sculpted busts of Hulk, Wolfenstein Soldier and more. TV screens played Voltes and GI Joe footage. Booths selling merchandise like stickers, wigs and hats were mobbed by cosplay fans.

There was a standing fandrop of Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince with a buccaneer that people could ride and snap photos with. Cosplayers paraded and posed.

All around, folks mapped away at this vast safari of fandom.

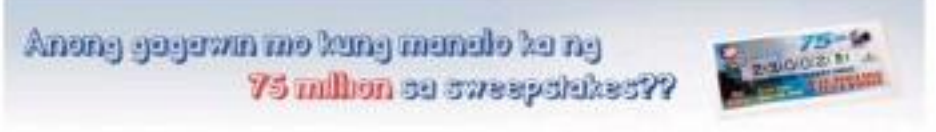
'Please sign my comic!'

One of the main event axes of the convention was the diamet

COSPLAYERS, CC

MEETING PLACE. ZeriousARTists put up their own booth.

SEQUIRED READING. Endless rows of comic books



Cosplayers, artists, comic book . .

from page D1

to get up close to artists and comic book creators, and to get their take on the "cool" (and). Comic book creator El-bert Or, who had his own booth at marchandise, said about the con, "Okay lang siya, but I'm surprised to see more toys than comic books. There are a lot of familiar faces, people who've been to conventions ... but there are also a lot who look lost."

Albert was interrupted by a fan pushing a pen and comic book into his face, gleefully pleading, "Sir, please sign my comic!"

"Ivrue" writer and co-creator Rudjette Tan peddled his comic and merchandise in his booth. "I went to the XICC (San Diego Comic Con) long ago," Rudjette said in hopes mingled in his breath. Previous comic book conventions were held at UP Diliman's Bahay ng Alumni, but the new organizer moved it to Megamall.

In the larger venue space, he said, "the atmosphere of this con is similar to the early days of XICC."

One corner of Megatrade was reserved for more than a dozen independent artists, selling bauble photocopy versions of their comics. Bobbert Indie DO Valley, the area a means by which underground artists could sell their stuff. One creator, Natasha Ringor, was pleased just to be able to sell 17 copies. "I'm really an amateur, but I'm glad it's here!" gushed Natasha as she showed off her comic, 'A Thousand Years.'

Jiggy and Jenny Cruz, Cory Aquino's grandsons and also avid comic fans, showed up. They would later have a generous long bull of merchandise, and sneak a peek at the toys based on their grandfather, Ninoy Aquino (see sidebar on page D4).

The fun is everyone

By 2:30 p.m. the convention hall was packed. There were rides game areas.

"I'm surprised I'm the only Star Trek cosplayer," said Barney Lee, dressed in a blue Star Trek crew uniform complete with insignia. Barney had gone to the recent San Diego con, and noted differences. "Not one thing, there's less crowds here. In XICC, the con has been overtaken by big companies. The vibe here is similar though. And Filipinos are more into anime."

A moment later she and her friends ushered into the crowd, on the way complimenting a guy who

CONTINUED ON

GAPPE NOCTEM. Jaqyn Palmaroth dad "Mistress Nocture"

YEAH I'RESE. Budjette Tan (2nd from left) with the "Ivrue" booth team

COSPLAY. Heroine

MAGNIFICENT. Ivrue booth

COMIC CREATOR. Elbert Or

SO NEAR, SO CLOSE. Norhanie Cordoba and Mandy Jacinto

ALL ABOUT THE HAT. Angelo Tabing

FERCY. Angelo Escudero

DISCOMAR. Emmanuel Basanta

CATTY. Monique Santos

HEROES. Anonymous

PRETTY IN PINK. Elena Qua

BLACK BUNNY. Jenni Dalisay

Magsha-shopping?

Cosplayers, artists . . .

From page B1

cause as Doctor Horrible.

Missy Stehli, a mom, followed her young son as he rushed to a shelf of Transformers. "The place reminds me of my kids," she said. "But we mostly came to see the people in costumes, to see how creative they are."

Casual acquaintances and old friends, classes by the premise of toys and comics, hollered and hugged each other. I bumped into an old high school friend who was scouting for Marvel action figures. "It's a hobby I share with my brother. The image (Marvel) characters are really cheap," my friend said.

That was one wonderful aspect of the con—it drew out the fan in everyone.

In the evening, there was an indie corsie panel headlined by creators like Budjette Tabi, Reno Maniquiz, Gilbert Monsanto, Gio Pamotea and Gemar Hechina. Artist Andrew Drilon was unwittingly pulled into the panel to answer questions. "I had no idea I was part of this panel," yanked An-

MATILDA: Ringer stuns all her savvy, "A Thousand Stars."

drew. "Anibuth panel?"

The day was an exhausting but exciting exposure to the vast world of pop culture in the Philippines. On hindsight looks extensive but was definitely worth it. Done with just snapshots of amazing sculptures, cool cosplay and a signed comic book, no one went home empty-handed.

It was an event fans felt was too little, too soon.

But many are already looking forward to next year.

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Bibili ng Kotse?

Cory tribute and other unique touches at Comic Con

We list the cool, the interesting, and the downright weird of MCC 2009

By Jul-Angelo Q. Segonia

"Paalam, Tita Cory"

A surprising and touching sight in Comic Con: a yellow tarp with the likenesses of Cory Aquino on it, huge enough for hundreds of con-goers to leave messages of thanks to the "Saint of People Power." It was very commendable for the organizers to place this commemorative tarp in the convention. It goes to show that even in these events, the hopes of a nation are still top of mind.

iamcollectible

Adorable, no? Yes, these are Mikey vinyl figures launched at Comic Con as part of the "iamcrazy" campaign. Mitch Ho of Imagine Nation Studios said, "They were proposed by the studio, and given the go ahead by 'iamcrazy.' They come in yellow and black or all-white editions so artists can create their own unique Mikeys. A con-goer bought one to "place in my workplace for inspiration." Proceeds from purchase go to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Now that's a cry with legacy.

Wigged out

Wigs, wigs, and more wigs! Lacking that vital accessory to complete the look of your favorite cosplay character? This stall offered wigs to whole range of radioactive rainbow colors.

Master of disguise

Somewhere in this pirate is Colin Valenzuela, who came as "The Box," an in-joke from the Metal Gear Solid video game series. Can you find him? It's hard, he's just so well-hidden.

It's obviously more than mere shades of "what to wear" when Ms. Shopping, dining and entertainment voice in the heart of Ortigas Center or what people fondly call as "gate." From easy breezy shopping, trending human watching or one of entertaining dining, Galleria has definitely endeared itself to thousands of its loyal patrons and shoppers throughout the years.

Every mood and corner of this sprawling destination is filled with surprises and new discoveries that patrons are always delighted with. Plus, it never runs out of something to share about every season whether it's the newly opened mall or international brand, food outlets, or famous midnight sales. On weekdays, young urban professionals and employees from different areas in Ortigas flock to Galleria to have their regular lunch outings, and dinner at their favorite restaurants or coffee outlet or maybe to even have some playtime at Toto's World. There are also moms who do their daily shopping and grocery at Robinsons Department Store and Supermarket and also their kids off at children play areas, some moms maybe occupied with other party errands like manicure and other beauty treatments always stop by their favorite hotel and international brands to check out the latest merchandise and avail bargain finds at fifth Ave, and The Gallery Fashion Institutes and students also go here on weekdays and weekends to enjoy endless activities at the activity area and do other things they love most.

Since its inception in 1995 up to the present, Robinsons Galleria continues to evolve as a mall to accommodate to the changing times and trends. Craving by its landscape and transforming the Ortigas skyline to what it is today. An iconic and by-word establishments and commercial area followed soon by the opening of Robinsons Galleria to maintain an incomparable shopping, dining and leisure destination with an already league of loyal patrons.

Situated in a dynamic mixed-use complex, Robinsons Galleria is also directly linked to five major commercials comprising of hotels, offices and residential that is Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila, Holiday Inn, Robinsons Equitable Tower, Galleria Corporate Center and Galleria Regency. These synergies of different entertainment options provide its consistently new, exciting, play and consumage all at the same time, without hassle.

Its close proximity to the historical EDSA shrines also became a significant factor for Robinsons Galleria. It also allowed mass public, especially families, to have fun and quality bonding time at the mall.

And now that it is about to turn two decades in operations, Robinsons Galleria continues to create and form new ways to serve its customers better, accordingly, the Food Court's area was also recently renovated to make everyone's dining experience more convenient and comfortable. It has also classified its food delivery areas to accommodate a growing number of quick orders. It also welcomes new food outlets here to check out how such as the fast-booming pasta cool Pancit, Hungry Hick, and Mount Rushmore.

Other unique dining destinations are Tender Moist, Chef Tony's and Dana Mitsuya at level 1, Las Flordas and ALTO Classic Gallery at level 2, Wing Fong at level 3, Sumo Sarabba at level 4.

Story continued in

After attracting such people with these new stores, Robinsons Galleria mall owners also already began to give you the best in gastronomic journey. Japanese cool-wonderland Japan-tochy play area Kids at Play, Kidzania, and Robin's Island are also a must visit. Others to watch out for these coming months are urgent talk The Whole Hat People in People outlet store Pearland, jam shop Uptown and Singaporean sushi Neo Lamak. There are also more amazing surprises coming up in the other special zones such as the Kiwi and Wood Wings. Some people do consistently view, work, shop, play and consumage all at the same time, without hassle.

Smells like indie spirit

The artists corner, dubbed Indie SOY Valley, was manned by independent artists selling their original work. For them, the iconic icons about camaraderie between artists and "world peace" (and I thought it was about survival).

Ninja is the new black (or white)

Despite his hectic schedule, ninja villain Storm Shadow from the movie G.I.Joe, graced the convention floor in his ancient, dual-katana wielding pose. You can catch him in his movie playing in all major cinemas (actually, no, this is obviously just a cosplayer—actually quite good one!).

"Con"-artists

A sketch table manned by the talents of Carlo Pagulayan, Harvey Tolibao, Jason Paz, Stephen Segonia and more. These professionals have done art for Marvel and DC, and some funky con-goers have these artists' original pencil sketches in their hands.

These stickers...

...speak for themselves.

Hide your children

Yes, someone came as notorious internet character Pedobear! I don't know what's worse: his freaking photo taken with kids, or grandmother chasing him for photo ops.

Magpapagawa ng mansyon?

Cool Pinoy Statement Tees At Kultura Filipino

SHOW your Pinoy pride with this My Philippines T-shirt

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IT'S NOW COOL TO LITERALLY WEAR YOUR PINOY spirit on your shoes with statement tees from Kultura Filipino. These tees express our lives and times with hip and relevant designs depicting Filipino culture, traditions, issues, and just about everything that defines us.

My Philippines tees give us a fresh perspective of Philippine history and pop culture. Team Manila's Ang Pambansang T-Shirt line explores and showcases the country's tourist spots, provinces, and cities in stylized text and digital art. Zilhaloo's hand painted T-shirts, on the other hand, express nationalism with their flag inspired designs.

Enjoy a dose of contemporary Pinoy humor and tongue in cheek satire with Pulse riders that comically capture everyday Pinoy life in rio-dyot and statement tees, and Rain Rain designs which collect things truly Pinoy with their simple yet classic designs.

Great for souvenirs, gifts for relatives abroad, or for simply expressing Filipino pride, My Philippines, Ang Pambansang T-Shirt, Zilhaloo, Pulse, and Rain Rain tees are available at Kultura Filipino stores at SM Makati, SM Megamall, The Block at SM City North Edsa, the SM Mall of Asia, and SM City Cebu.

PIGMO did t with an iconic peapoy pose

Who's Cory to us?

Compiled by Ruth Navarra, Tricia Dimagiba and Ice Ilao

"THE FREEDOM I AM ENJOYing now, I owe to Cory. She showed and inspired us to pray and to have faith in God and to do things that would benefit others people." — Elaiza Clemente, Bangko, 3B, University of Santo Tomas

"We see, Cory is the 'Unifying Saint.' She was a president who was not only respected, but loved by the people."
— Celou Concepcion, 18, UST

"Hindi man siya nabigyan ng todo ang Pilipinas, nabigyan niya ng lawang ang puso ng bawat Pinoy para bigyan ang Pilipinas."
— Miga Sanchez, 28, UST

"In I grow up, I intend my parents to tell me stories about mortal law like my own mother used to tell me here religious Tita Cory was, and how she sacrificed for the people. She loved each and every one of us tirelessly."
— Eleane Dionisio, 20, UST

"Despite her simplicity, she was able to make change in the Philippines. She was a mother who showed great care for the nation." — Dany Quizon, 19, Ateneo de Manila University

"We thank her for everything that we have now and what the future generation will have as well." — Sheila Magpayo, 21, De La Salle University

"Cory Aquino is the mother of the Philippines and a woman of contribution."
— Sonni Abbas, DLSU

"Cory is an example of the true leader. She is an inspiration to every Filipino."
— Christian Bello, 18, De la Salle-College of St. Benilde

"I never experienced Edsa, but I see her as a woman of integrity and strength who did not let grief defeat her. She stood tall and did what she knows must be done. I hope one day I can still rise to the occasion to fight for what is right with as much grace as she had. Salamat, Cory."
— Carmen Gamboa, 19, St. Scholastica

"She did everything for our dear country and she brought us pride. I also admire her for being a woman of simplicity and faith. President Cory is God's gift to the Filipinos and she makes us proud to be one."
— Gerrela Manrique, 17, University of the Philippines-Diliman

"I see Cory Aquino as a mother to every Filipino people. She was the light our country needed during its most crucial moments."
— Peepe Junior Librata, 19, UP

"Cory was a woman of virtue and faith. She proved to everybody that a woman can make a difference."
— Sherr Oliver, 26, UP

"President Cory will forever be the mother of the nation."
— Pauline Pinzuna, 19, UST

"President Cory Aquino is not just an icon of democracy but also a mother to us Filipinos. I am so thankful to her for the kindness we ever had. It's such an honor to be a Filipino because of her."
— Renee Naval, UST

"She showed me that loving your country you can make such a big difference."
— Patricia Arenales, 20, University of Asia and the Pacific

"I still feel deeply indebted to her for the freedom and democracy that we are enjoying today."
— Rachelle Flores, 18, UAAP

"Cory stood up for what the believed was right, and never gave up."
— Pia Hilarbal, 18, UAAP

"She was a very inspiring woman. I will try to carry all the lessons I learned from her until I grow old and gray."
— Marlon Evangelista, 30, University of the East

"For me, she's an inspiration, both as a Filipino and as a woman."
— Kira Fernandez, 17, Polytechnic University of the Philippines-Manila

"Cory Aquino led our nation in the fight for freedom—armed only with the rosary and faith."
— Paula Debuna, 16, St. Paul College

"She was a woman of action, a definite example of pure selfless love and service for the Filipino nation. She leaves a legacy of optimism—in believing that our nation can be
and will be better." — Pamela Kingbak, 18, Assumption College

"Through her I learned that being Filipino is the best gift from God." — Olivia Roque, 17, De la Salle-Zobel

"Cory had both humility and power—two attributes that don't always run well together." — Bernadette Stolz, 16, International School Manila

"Cory Aquino is the reason why we Filipinos know how to fight for our rights, today-tomorrow labor." — Denise Chua, 16, De La Salle-Zobel

Young Filipinos who weren't yet around during the Cory era celebrate the Cory magic

A League of Brothers

RABEH Ferdinand

JM

TUTOR, ERIC, BADER

Blended with yellow, the adidas UAAP fan wears were a hit during the game, a thing noticeable from the wavy silhouettes and La Salleans and circuit passers-loving Filipinos.

adidas is celebrating 100 years of educational excellence with Ateneo with its 100 Season/Carnival designs. For Lasallians, the UAAP fan wears are focused on their Animo mantra serving for performance and greatness.

adidas, an ardent believer of brotherhood in the UAAP!

Times Change But the Brotherhood Remains.

What it takes to be a fashion illustrator

Some tips from a young Italian

By Luis Carlo Sanjose

THIS particular artwork is her favorite because it brought good luck.

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A fashion illustrator in one of the world's fashionable cities?

More specifically, what is it like to be one of the world's more popular fashion illustrators whose works are hapged up online?

Bibi gave an exclusive interview (via e-mail!) with Milan-based illustrator Cristiana De Fanchi.

Cristiana comes from the lovely city of Padua, Italy. She was born there in 1974. In 1994, she moved to Milan where she enrolled Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti (NABA) fashion design courses until 1998. NABA is a private fine arts academy recognized by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research.

Her first job was with fashion houses, designing ready-to-wear lines such as Genevieve Lier, Versus and Iceberg.

Eventually, in 2006, she opted to go on her own and founded Studio Fanzanna with partner Pietro Gaudenzi.

Above them, Cristiana has been with the agency IMAGeneration. Her works are published in fashion magazines such as Vogue Nippon, Marie Claire, Annabelle, Elle, Grazia and Redbook.ewed.

How did you get into fashion illustration?

I was working as a fashion editorial board when I started publishing the first illustrations. There I found new clients and suggestions, also thanks to my current agency, Imaginar.

CHRISTIANA is inspired by the fashion of her base city of Milan.

Additionally, I teamed my first found work with Pietro Gaudenzi (also my boyfriend) and together we developed a digital pictorial technique (we use primitively Photoshop) which had a great success because of its versatility and rapidity.

Since things were going better and better, this became my official job.

HER SIGNATURE style is always showing great detail on the clothes.

What makes your artwork different from the others?

Maybe the fact that we amalgamate fashion trends and personal tastes. I think I and Pietro have an independent point of view, are not bound to fashion rules. This allows us to create original matches of dresses, accessories and objects, but we can also follow the magazine's or our client's style.

Obviously we do have our style, but at the same breath we are able to evolve and invent something different each new.

What inspires you?

Everything! I strongly believe it's very important to look about. Observe daily things, look at great artists' works (painters, illustrators, photographers, both past and present ones), and read as well; it is important to be informed.

What advice can you give young, budding illustrators?

Hard to say, experience the more you can and work by yours!

Get the perfect eyebrows right at home

By Kenzie Capili
Photograph by Ole

CHIC!! Barrymore has always been an epitome of beauty with flawless brows

Quick tips from Shu Uemura makeup artist Claire Seelin-Dokno on how brows could be tweezed to make you look younger, slimmer and friendlier

YOU WANT TO DO YOUR EYEbrows but you don't know where to start, or even where to go. You've come to salons for basic threading which all your girlfriends go, and though you come home without a single extra hair, you know that your brow still has some untapped potential. Reshaping websites with style statements isn't helping either because you just can't seem to put your finger on how you can take your beautiful arches to the next level. Shu Uemura makeup artist Claire Seelin-Dokno shares quick tips on how to get the perfect—not exaggerated—arc of brows right at home, and how a few changes can make you look younger, thinner, more approachable, or even more intelligent!

1 "Eyebrows are the crowning glory of the face," explains Claire, who recently underwent a training session under Shu Uemura headquarter's chief makeup artist, Brian Bell. She says that there are four important details to remember when grooming your brows: proportion (in relation to your face), length, arc, and strength. (how dark or light your brows should be). Claire says there are five eyebrow prominence guidelines when shaping brows:

Point A, is the outer tip of the brow. Drawing a vertical line from the outer edge of your nose through your true brow will help you find this point, or simply put a pencil next to the outer edge of your nose. Point A extends here for short your eyes appear. If your eyes are too close together, Claire advises to pull back where your eyebrows begin.

Imagine a vertical line through the center of your iris to your eyebrow to locate Point B. Point C on the other hand is parallel to the outer edge of the iris. These points are references for where you are going to put your eyebrow peak. The highest point must be between these two points. To look more serene, or friendlier and approachable, make your peak closer to point C as it creates a rounder arc with a smoother progression. A peak closer to point B makes one look more worried, as with the popular brow shape of the 1990's.

Here's a proof as it grows the outer corner of your eye, the outer edge of your nose until it hits the center of your lip to get Point D, the point where your eyebrows should end. If your brows fall short of point D, your temples will appear more wider, while going past it will make temples appear shorter. While there should not be drawing their brows a few finger (but point 'B' while smaller them should shape their brows shorter than point D.

JUST follow these quick points to get the perfect eyebrows

2 Analyze the shape of your face and see what asset you would like to highlight or minimize. The denser your brows are, the larger your face appears. Full brows, on the other hand, makes one look younger and thinner. "Check your forehead to gauge how high your peak should be. If you find your forehead to appear too large, you may fill the entire brow a bit to shade the forehead."

3 Once you've decided the shape of your brows, brush the hair outwards with a spoolly brush or a toothbrush. You may opt to draw the desired shape of your eyebrows with an eyebrow pencil before removing it. Trim hairs stragle that are outside of the outline, but take care not to trim too close to the line or you may end up with a tendoss bald spot. Tweeze remaining hairs that were not removed by shaving at a 45-degree angle, but "do not remove above the arc or between brows because a might enlarge your pores," says Claire. Don't touch the area after tweezing and refrain from waxing for at least eight hours. Remember that thinner eyebrows makes one look more fierce or intense.

4 When lifting in brows, use one or two shades darker than the peak to the outer end of the brow. Use the lighter shade for the rest of the area and with an angled brow brush, fill in between points A and C with a backward motion with "short light strokes," says Claire. A classic brow, which has a full brow, avoids (referring to shadowing or thinning of the brow), but the area between points A and B as the darkest area, while the area between point B and C are darkest for brows that make one to appear more intelligent. In addition, is also full, has a high peak and end, is square than round, and close. She also adds that if you have the perfect color of eyebrow pencils; you may use a bit of clear mascara to keep the strands in place or you may also use tinted brow mascara. All brows have to taper, starting the subtle decrease from the peak.

"When in doubt, just follow the natural curves of your brow. Don't over-pluck since you don't know when your brow will grow back. As we age, brow growth slows down and newly tattooed brows add 20 years to your face," Claire says. Another option is to drop by Shu Uemura's boutique at The Power Plant Mall where their trained beauty stylists can shape your brows—for free, a session, which they normally charge for in other countries—and teach you how to maintain it. With brows perfectly suited to your face shape, who needs all that makeup? Groomed eyebrows are your best bet for a toned-the-look polished look.

Samsung unveils C3053 and Preston

SAMSUNG MOBILE WAS RECENTLY introduced Samsung C3053 and Samsung Preston.

The phones were launched separately At the newest Samsung Mobile concept store at the lower ground of the Cyberzone of SM City Manila, Samsung executives Fe Natilla, Mylene Gabriel, Stephanie Chua, Andrew Limbaco and Ricky Bautista, together with SM City Manila's Giuseppe Isabelita, Aida Carrera and Melissa Lipana, joined fourteen celebrity-based students in welcoming Samsung C3053, billed as "the campus buddy."

The C3053 is a phone encased in a slim frame with a 2.0" LCD display, containing a VGA camera with zoom-area shot function that allows one to take several photos and stitch them together for a panoramic image.

It also has Bluetooth (Samsung capability for sharing with friends for free and MP3 and Radio features that provide the ultimate in music portability.

The new C3053's memory is expandable via microSD. The phone also has an anti-theft feature, the Mobile Tracker. Priced at less than P5,000, the phone is available in midnight black, metallic orange, snow pink, snow white and purple.

The Samsung Preston (B7320) was unveiled during the launch of the newest Samsung Experience Store at the SM Mall of Asia (2/F North Wing). In the launch, themed "The Magic of Touch," Samsung Preston treated guests to an enchanting afternoon filled with magic and mystique. Present were Samsung VP for mobile, phones Charles Chui, BDS International's Ben Yu, Stanley Domingo, Marvelo Domingo and Sheila Ngo. Also present was the assistant president for SM Malls, Steven Tan.

Spotted at the launch were model-host Kristine Hingco, TV personalities Lyn Ching and JC Tiuseco, and Samsung ramptrotts Andrew Limbaco, Coco Bondoc, Lyn Tin, Rano Ignacio, Patrik Mascardon, Michelle Sevilla, Kirby Ibarrola, Jessie Pasaol and Stephanie Chua.

Samsung Preston is compact and slim (measuring a mere 1 2.9mm in thickness). It has a sleek design.

Internet browsing will be a more enjoyable experience with the Preston's XHtmpa. Mbitss, with 10MBPS speeds of up to 7.2mbps. It has an accelerometer, which allows one to switch to portrait or landscape view when the phone is turned.

The Preston's widget allows for both local and online applications to be easily displayed and accessed. Knowing one's calendar schedule or even accessing one's online social network account can be done with the simple touch of a finger.

Samsung Preston is available at all Samsung mobile phone dealers nationwide. Suggested retail price is P12,990.

O, magsha-shopping ng mga bahay at kotse around the world?

IT'S ALWAYS green on their side of the fence.

BEING a part of Greg Green is a dream and there's no medicine to cure it.

Win or lose, it's Green they choose

By Patrick Leonard Maya
PhilSTAR Correspondent

YELLOW WAS THE color of the day during the Ateneo-La Salle game last Sunday.

But as I gazed over the huge crowd, I noticed a cluster of guys on the La Salle side wearing green shirts instead of yellow. They were even leading the cheers to pump up the crowd.

They were a group of students and alumni who had decided to remain true to their color, but they still honored President Aquino by wearing yellow pins. They aptly called themselves Greg Green.

"Our main purpose is to pep up the team and for fans through our cheers," said Michael Reyes, an 18-year-old Electronics and Communications Engineering major from De La Salle-Manila. The group was actually started by a group of students in 2000 and, since then, they already have hundreds of members within the university and around 40 of them, the core group, watch every single game of the Archers. They usually occupy the upper box portion of the arena.

Thanks to modern technology, membership in Greg Green has become easy and their number has been growing steadily. "We are able to recruit new members through the Internet," said Patrick Mendiz, a 27-year-old Business Management alum. "We have fan websites, www.earthpride.com where we have forums for the fans and for the students who might be interested in joining the group. Greg Green is open to all Lasallians who want to support the team."

Not only when it matters

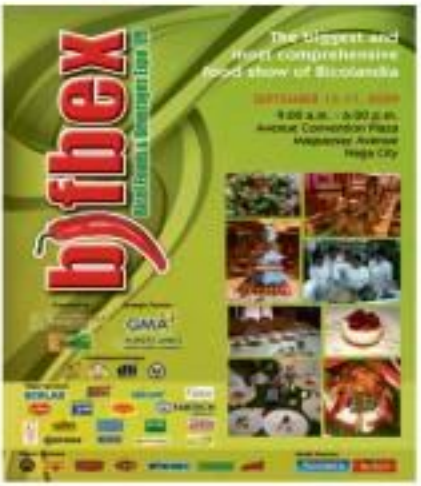
Like every other group, Greg Green wouldn't be complete without reasons as a handicap. "We choose Yan only when it matters because we are here not only when the team is up or winning, but most especially when it is losing. We have been used to seeing the winning tradition of La Salle, and now that the team is struggling a bit, the more we need to show our support," said Mendiz.

Going all-out

Those die-hard fans have extended their love and support not only through their cheers but also through their activities off the court. "We organize parties and thanksgiving dinners for the players, whether they have a winning season or not. We also purchase our own shirts that we wear during the games," Mendiz said.

The bunch they are for their projects generally come from their own pockets, a "collective effort" as they would like to call it. At the end of every game, whether the Green Archers win or lose, these guys and gals go out and have dinner and celebrate their loyal clan has been forged by their love for their alma mater.

STAYING TRUE. They wore yellow shirts instead of donning green shirts for only one reason: "Our color is green."



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Mas malaki ang tsansang manalo kapa sa! Bakit ako wa, kumonber ay pangarap.

Top five moments in the UAAP first round

By Patrick Leonard Playe
ZM Correspondent

BEFORE WE GO TO THE second round of eliminations in the UAAP Men's basketball tournament, let's take a look at the moments that made the first round exciting.

The following are my personal top five picks.

Heartwarming tribute

The first second couldn't have ended in a better way where the Ateneo and La Salle contenders both agreed to wear yellow last Sunday to pay tribute to former president Cory Aquino. It was unprecedented in the 72-year history of the UAAP when the two rival schools donned a color that was neither blue nor green. The Ateneo Cobrastone was packed with a sea of yellow as the song "Bayan Ko" played in the air before the game started.

Ateneo vs La Salle: Round one

This one is a no-brainer. Every Ateneo-La Salle match-up has proven to be one for the history books and their recent encounter again left everyone up on their feet up to the last second. The game was an intense clue all half almost broke loose when Green Archer Joshua Webb unleashed a kick on Ateneo's Rabeh Al-Hussaini after a rebound play near the end of the game. They needed an extra period to settle the score, which saw the Blue Eagles claw a come-from-behind victory over their archrivals. With the Blue Eagles drawing first blood, we'll see if the Archers can bounce back consecutive to their rematch.

LA Salle players came prepared for the occasion as they wore "Cory" shirts and flashed the familiar "Laban" sign.

Battle of Katipunan

We normally see upsets of gargantuan proportions in basketball every once in a while but this one really caught everyone off guard. The struggling UP Fighting Maroons stunned their Katipunan neighbors from ateneo and, well, the rest of us, when they turned what was supposed to be a "no-loser" game into a 10-point upset win. The reactions of people after the game ranged from disbelief to jubilation. I even remember a resident of mine who was really was a fan of basketball tell me that all they were talking about the whole week was the UP-Ateneo game.

Back-to-back double OTs

Now get all their money's worth as the National University Bulldogs-Adamson Falcons and University of Santo Tomas Growling Tigers-DLSU Green Archers match-ups ended in double overtime fashion. The energy and intensity levels rose as the Bulldogs and Archers both came from behind and earned seeming defeats into probable victories.

Rookies break out

Debrid rookies lived up to the hype when DLSU's Kevin Ortigas and UST's Aric Yeng exploded with their career-high 21 and 22 points, respectively. Ortigas' outpost powered La Salle to a double-OT victory over UST while Yeng's brilliance saved the day for the Tigers in their game against the Warriors.

Ortigas was a former Juniors Most Valuable Player in the NCAA last year for San Sebastian while Yeng, the son of former pro Alvin Yeng, was the main scorer for Ateneo. Those two will surely be battling it out for the Rookie of the Year honors.

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MECHANICS:

To join the promo, customers must simply purchase any of the following:

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- one (1) or more SM Green Bags plus a single receipt purchase or four (4) cinema tickets from SM Cinema
- one (1) or more SM Green Bags plus a P1.50 minimum purchase of tokens from the Amusement Centers

DISTRIBUTION OF RAFFLE COUPONS:

- 1 SM Green Bag = 1 coupon
- P500 single/accumulated purchase from SM Department Store, SM Hypermarket and participating establishments = 1 coupon
- P100 single receipt purchase from SM Foodcourt = 1 coupon
- Single Receipt Purchase of 4 cinema tickets = 1 coupon
- P150 single purchase of tokens from Amusement Centers = 1 coupon

MALL HOURS:

SM City Cebu, SM City Baliwag, SM City Sta Rosa, SM City Cagayan de Oro:
August 14, 15 and 16 – 10am to 10pm

SM City Sta. Mesa :
August 14 and 15 – 10am to 11pm
August 16 – 10am to 10pm

SM Supercenter Valenzuela :
August 14 and 15 – 10am to 12pm
August 16 – 10am to 9pm

SM City Bacolod :
August 14 – 10am to 12mn
August 15 and 16 – 10am to 10pm

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Lady Gaga pours her heart—and mind—out to Inquirer

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BIKO MACHINE

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

1								4
	5			1		2		9
		9			7		8	
		2					3	
		4		3		8	6	
		5					1	
		1			2		4	
	9			7		6		5
7								1

Difficulty level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	8	3	9	5	2	7	4	6
9	6	2	1	4	7	5	3	8
4	5	7	8	6	3	9	1	2
3	7	8	5	1	6	2	3	4
2	1	6	3	7	4	8	5	9
5	4	9	2	8	9	1	7	6
7	8	9	4	2	5	3	6	1
6	3	1	7	9	8	4	2	7
8	2	4	6	3	1	9	8	5

Look Gaga

Who else goes through immigration in a jacuzzi?

"WE ARE ALL FRIENDS," LADY Gaga said calmly at her big, 11-piece conference. Dressed in khaki trench coat, shiny gold bustier and black statement boots, the pop icon glided onto the stage and stopped for pictures doing Sabrina's infamous hands-on-the-hips, cleavage out, and pursed-lips pose.

Yes, in lieu of a smile, Ms Gaga pouted. For all photos in such stateliness—at definitive lockdowns that her fashions and vocals are not so ethereal. That, and the huge blank room atop her blonde locks, the blank chicken she wore inside a hotel ballroom at five in the afternoon, and, well, pretty much all her videos and photos.

It is a time when "budget," "cheap" and "recession" were all the buzz words, perhaps Lady Gaga's approach to fashion is well-intentioned and considered because it doesn't give in to the dictates of the economy.

There's bold in sequins, leatherettes, jewelry, gloves, and boots—worn all at the same time—and she doesn't know moderation. She even dances with a flower embellishment on her shoulder. Sure that, Carrie Bradshaw?

But it could be that the high-cut leotard and disfigured shoulders are, in fact, her signature look. Who else dares go through [illegible] garden in a "burqa"? Only her!

LADY Gaga in ripped leggings

How to get the look?

Hit the nearest dance clothing shop for a leotard. Hello Dorothy and Yvonne's. But if you're not too keen on having some leg (or lots of leg), pile on all-lady Gaga's key style elements as much as you wish.

In her case, it truly is the more the merrier. As she declares in her song, "My friends and I always feed like fabulously even when we weren't eating."

Gaga fever online

Lady Gaga-related Facebook posts, tweets, Youtube videos and pictures flooded the Internet the day Lady Gaga arrived in Manila

By Pam Pastor

The Internet has really changed everything—even the way we enjoy our concerts. Those who weren't lucky—or fast enough—to get their hands on tickets got blow-by-blow updates as soon like Twitter and Facebook, thanks to members of the audience who couldn't keep their hands off their mobile phones. If we want to relive moments of the show we're sure, all we need to do is go on Youtube and search videos of the concert. Photos from the show are also uploaded on the same night—on Photobucket, no less.

This was the case with Lady Gaga's concert. And the best part, we didn't have to try to figure out if Lady Gaga enjoyed the show as much as she did—she told us so on Twitter just a few minutes after she took a final bow: "Thank you manila, never forget u. Luv my fans so much. u r the reason I'm here."

Below is a compilation of Tweets and Facebook posts on the night of the concert:

Tricia Tengo: Watching Gaga tonight! Wow! Goosebumps, sets u thrilled.

Tricia Tengo: Just got in our seats—Lady Gaga concert aba. Pangyanan. 2009 dash General Assemble of the Berkshire Burgos Chapter.

sparkleyeyes: This is the longest time period I've ever heard a thousand people scream simultaneously consistently welcome to manila, Gaga.

FierceHitter: lady Gaga is a wrestling topic? Fabulous!!!!!!

Joseph Bernad: amazed everyone at the Upper Box by dancing and screaming, sorry Gaga fans.

Mitochira Cue: thank god Lady Gaga performed the dance version of Poker Face.

dyoxcite: pre-gaming before lady gaga stats is good like, but just enough buzz to enjoy the wrap show

nobodyknew: is drunk on @lindsgaga

plainsgalcom: We're home! Great show, Lady G :) :)

Mimi Tee: can still hear Lady Ga Ga in my head singing, "bang, bang" We've been out of and "dirty dick?" Indeed, we are. :)

Fanny Cuenco: is envious of everyone who got to get Gaga.

Rain De Vera: I lost my voice (again!) But it's all worth it! Calling ano ako? Gaga ko iyan!

Shreggie Gallego: just had an extremely religious experience, she is now the High Priest of the Church of Gaga.

The lady is a tramp

Stripping her bubble dress down to a two-piece, dancing away, Lady Gaga is a smash, like the music

By Wenggie Gallego

BUBBLE? Lady Gaga behind the piano

SHE HOOVER'S COLISEUM WHO packed those seats pit to the bleachers. Everyone had some to dance to the music of the artist who is "bluffin' with her muffin."

It's not enough she wears smoky tunes with jaws dropping lyrics; Lady Gaga nailed the deal with: no annoying stories about me and off stage, im in your face-not-nuts in interviewed, and an urban mythology that is growing online.

Lady Gaga is not just a performer, she is the show. The gown songs are just part and parcel of the extravaganza. The person is not an entertainer, she is the music.

But Lady Gaga going live in the true-est, is she all hype?

Unlike many artists on world tours, Lady Gaga treated this as if it were the concert of her life. She engaged the crowd, danced with fervor and sang her lungs out. Before "Beautiful, Dirty, Rich," she told the crowd her best friend back in New York is a Filipino and recalled how they cheated of making it big one day. The crowd ate it all up.

She had over four costume changes, "bought a motorcycle" onstage for "The Fame," played the keyar and were various hairstyles.

The crowd sing along to non-single songs ("Boys, Boys, Boys" and "Eh, Eh (Nothing Else I Can Say)," proving that they weren't there just for "Poker Face."

After the energetic crowd pleasers "Just Dance," Gaga arose off stage for another costume change and returned to bubble dress, silver wig, and mask. The piano, also decked in pink bubble wrap, was brought out, and the audience exploded into applause. They knew they would get their live version of "Poker Face," which has grown into the lady on sing and that she is a true musician.

She then began to play and sing "Brown Eyes," the only song in "The Fame" that comes close to a ballad. Then, to everyone's delight, she began to strip her bubble dress to reveal a two-piece that left very little to the imagination. She regained her performance on Elton DeGenerez' show by squatting on her piano chair while playing the piano.

At the song's crescendo, the crowd was delighted to see her on the played with her two hands and right feet, slamming on the keys and punching out every word, it was magic.

Set one to end on such a note, Lady GaGa was joined by her dancers and faced for a Full Monty rendition of "Poker Face" on the crowd-going and danced along.

There was no doubt the Philippines won in a swoon. We can't wait to see her back here next year...calls to celebrate the second album, we'll all wear our poker faces.

'I wear no pants so my grandma can see me on TV'

From page C1

performances. But people still can't get enough of her.

She doesn't mind though. "There are such thing as too popular," she said, laughing.

Burlesque rock show

Someone was not kidding. Lady Gaga paid her dues, and had to work as a songwriter for musical acts like Britney Spears and New Kids on the Block. She performed in New York's lowest level clubs while at once, in the mainstream, as a pop artist, in "The Grinning Pig Burlesque Backdrop."

Beneath the makeup and glitz is a rich musical history.

Lady Gaga isn't just pop packaging. She learned how to play the guitar at four, started writing songs at 13, and began performing at open mic nights at 14. At 17, she got early admission to New York University's Tisch School of the Arts where she studied music.

The glitz and the glamor isn't pure artifice, something she owns. But it really who she is. "I believe in the glamorous life. I did this before my album was a success. I did this for the love of it. I did it to sing and [illegible] and I had my artistic spirit. This is something that will always be with me."

Through her music, she hopes to encourage people to express like she does. "My album 'The Fame' is about [illegible] fame, its pointless and camera-less, it's not so agreeable. I want everyone in the world to feel just like my friends spend 1 in New York [illegible]—we're famous without anyone talking or not see."

Now she is really famous—and things are only beginning for this Singapore-born artist.

Lady Gaga kept talking about how excited she was about her second tour with Kanye West. "I've played in arenas before as opening act but this full, I'm on [illegible] with Kanye. Now we're designing the show. It's going to be amazing. Next year, when I come back to Europe and Asia, I'm going to be in my arenas by myself."

She didn't know that it would happen sooner than she thought.

Wild crowd

Tuesday night, Lady Gaga [illegible] and I hear lyrics. If I'm really good about it, I wake up and I record them.

'Some people think that I'm doing lines of cocaine in my dressing room. Truth is, I'm doing sit-ups and I'm praying'

Where do you get your inspiration?

All over. This is a good example (points to her fake snapshot phone). I don't know if you remember the photos of Paris Hilton and Nicky Hilton and Jennifer Lopez and Cristal on their yacht. Those girls were my inspiration. I was reading tabloids and if they were textbooks. This also has a bit of Courtney Love style to it. There's an art to fame, I get it. I'm not trying to be famous, I'm what inspired the Paparazzi videos.

You seem to be really passionate about your family—do you still have time to be with them?

I haven't seen them for a while but my family is my heart and soul. I'm very family-oriented. They're very close with me.

Do they still get shocked by the things that you do?

No. What's so funny is that my family knows I'm an [illegible]. I think he sees weird for my entire music [illegible] thing. They love my music. They love my crazy outfits.

How about your grandmother?

She doesn't tell about my grandmother is me. My grandmother's blind—she had a tumor years ago and when she had surgery, she woke up and couldn't see any-

more. Over time, she developed the ability to see in certain spots and colors. But she can only see light against dark so when I wave my pants with black leotards, she can see my legs. She actually watch TV or my grandfather would put her on the Internet and she'd say, "Oh I can see her legs, there are her little legs." It was like she was aware of some thing—I wear no pants so my grandma can see me on TV. It's true.

You're very comfortable about your body. Were you ever insecure about anything as teenager?

I was a girl just like everyone else. I had a lot of insecurities. I was inside [illegible] a lot in school. I didn't have a lot of friends. I always have a laugh with the [illegible], my creative traits, because I my nothing has changed. They say, what do you mean? Being a pop singer is not what going to change and I never overdo, because I'm not friends with celebrities and I don't really like celebrities, I still feel like the weird girl in high school.

Is it easy? I think some of them are a bit afraid of me. In another way, I don't know if they just don't like me. I still hold the [illegible] in high school and I'm still a complete outsider.

Can you tell us about your Filipino best friend?

I've known her since I was four. Interestingly enough, we just moved [illegible] and my other best

AN AUTOGRAPHED copy of the "Fame"

friend is from Korea. Neither of them has been to Korea or the Philippines—they're American girls but their families are from Korea and the Philippines. My girlfriend and I grew up very strong and dedicated women. We believe in empowering ourselves as feminine beings. We always dressed our fronts as if we were dressing for the boys and now everybody else has had to accept it.

How possible is it to be 100 percent original?

It is difficult in the original all the time. But the challenge of an artist like myself is to

be consistently different. For example, leather and bondage is not a new sound thing to do. Madonna did it, she still features be the one who did it and broke through.

But I love bondage and I love to [illegible] and lace and I won't deny myself my right to express that. But the challenge is to do it in a new way and in a new context and say something different.

What you would it take to compete with you as an artist?

I don't think anyone can compete with you. I don't think I can compete with anyone else. I am myself and I'm a different kind of and elevated artist. I'm just excited that everyone loves as much as the album I wears.

'I was reading tabloids as if they were textbooks'

When did you realize you had made it?

I don't know. I'm only [illegible] and I have to [illegible] myself that. But the challenge is to do it in a new way and in a new context and say something different.

What you would it take to compete with you as an artist?

I don't think anyone can compete with you. I don't think I can compete with anyone else. I am myself and I'm a different kind of and elevated artist. I'm just excited that everyone loves as much as the album I wears.

FAIRWAYS LIVING

The Pueblo Golf Estates is one of Cagayan de Oro's hidden gems, consisting of over 40 hectares of high-value residential lots developed to blend with the natural setting of one of the finest golf courses in the Philippines.

Scenic Views

The six clusters of the Pueblo Golf Estates are tucked away and interwoven with Pueblo Golf's championship course, providing truly scenic views.

One only needs to open the window to behold a terrain crisscrossed with dazzling natural terrains, stunning vistas of the mountains of Balatukan, shimmering lakes, and rolling emerald green fairways. With its prime lots, homeowners are assured of getting the best of what life has to offer.

Breathing Room

The cluster concept of the Pueblo Golf Estates allows for fewer lots per area. The lower lot density provides greater air circulation and a more serene and peaceful environment, allowing for spacious living. One can experience nature in all its glory here – kingfishers swooping down on the waters of the lakes and brahminy kites wheeling in their majestic dance in the sky.

The facilities of the Pueblo Golf Estates, including landscaped entrance gates with guardhouses, perimeter wall, wide connected roads, complete electrical, water and drainage systems, and 24-hour security, among others, are provided to assure homeowners' comfort and peace of mind.

The Midas Touch

Rated among the Top Five golf courses in the country, Pueblo Golf today is the best golfing destination in Southern Philippines. World-renowned golf course architect Robert Trent Jones II created this links masterpiece of a golf course. The complete layout of the 18-hole par 72 all-weather championship course, with its intimidating fairways and gauntlet of roughs and bunkers exposed to unpredictable winds, makes an exciting and challenging playing field for all types of golfers. Pueblo Golf's turf is composed of Tifton and Tifdwarf grass imported in re-frigerated vans from Georgia, U.S.A.

Strategic Location

The Pueblo Golf Estates offers residents a lifestyle like no other. Surrounded by the natural beauty of the golf course, it imparts a leisurely way of life one would not expect in the city's major growth area. As part of the Pueblo de Oro Township, the Pueblo Golf Estates is to conveniently located near top schools and the SM Mall. It is close by the airport and is only a few minutes' drive downtown. There are those who have to endure early morning traffic just to make their tee time. At the Pueblo Golf Estates, there is no need to drive across town – the golf course is right at your backyard.

Have you ever dreamed of coming home to a place where you can savor the richness of life?

PUEBLO DE ORO

A place to nurture a family, to build memories and lasting friendships.
A place to work, to rest and enjoy life's simple pleasures.

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Where the best of Cagayan de Oro and everything
you could ever ask for is within your reach.

Pueblo de Oro Development Corporation masterfully planned a 360-hectare township, complete with exceptional residential alcoves, booming commercial and business hubs and a Robert Trent Jones II championship golf course rated as one of the top 5 in the Philippines.

Aside from the Pueblo de Oro Township in Cagayan de Oro, Pueblo de Oro Development Corporation has residential communities in Cebu and Laguna and is planning to start developments in other parts of the country.

PUEBLO DE ORO

About Pueblo de Oro: The Gold Standard in Community Living

Pueblo de Oro is committed to address the needs of a growing and dynamic consumer market by providing a comprehensive product mix that includes quality residential facilities, ranging from exclusive residential villages for the high-end market to value-packed middle income housing packages and affordable economic housing to thriving commercial centers where businesses of whatever size can locate.

More information at www.pueblodeoro.com

Super LIFESTYLE

How was life like circa 'BC' (Before Cell phones)?

Maybe the active adults of long ago were actually more punctual and efficient

THUNDER ROAD

James Gabrillo

ON A RECENT FRIDAY NIGHT, I got off the MRT to meet my friend Sara. As I emerged, my vibrating cell phone had five messages. It shook like an energetic Chihuahua.

One was from my pal Marvin who said he was at the gate. Another was from JR who was in his car. Then a text message from Mia who said she was bored, one from Carl who just left his office, and still another from Sam, who told me he was in an Irish bar a few streets away from the train station.

I walked to the line, rang up Sara when I got to the block. He met me on the street. He had just given a call on his cell from Mikko who wanted us to come to a party at her friend's house. She promised it would be fun.

Sam texted her back for the address. I called JR to tell him. JR said he would pick us up. Mikko zapped Sam for the address. I quickly called Carl to tell him to meet us on the catchment corner of the bar's street, left a message for Martin in solitude to call me if he wanted to go and texted Mia and gave her the address.

Carl came, Mia rolled, Martin texted "Too tired," JR picked us up and we flew.

Easy living

How the hell did people make plans before cell phones? Did they just casually arrange their meetings and parties weeks in advance and stick to schedules?

Now everything is so easy to find, so easy to get in, so easy to locate, and I have more friends and acquaintances (from sorce... Friendster, Multiply, Facebook, Blogger buddies and Last.fm pals.

I keep making plans with all of them. Usually we meet for well-scheduled dinners, talk and take pictures with our phones. Then we drive home and upload the photos on Shutterfly the next day, followed by group comments with lots of lovely jokes.

There is no way we could make plans without all our devices. Here are three examples:

Last week I was supposed to meet Sara at a restaurant. Sara arrived before me, only to discover that the restaurant was closed. It was a rainy night so he texted me: "Come to the Italian joint across the street. "Shingle!

Yesterday I was late for a meeting (there was a vehicular accident or bomb threat or a tsunami scare or something), but I just called ahead to make sure they knew I was on my way his geek!

Last month, when I was heading to meet Mads at a mall bakery, I couldn't remember what floor it was on. I called the mall information desk while I walked in the general direction and met him without delay. Thank you, satellite technology!

Mallow

Unavoidable snags like these certainly happened before 1998 (the last year of BC: Before Cell phones), but I have no recollection of how I dealt with them.

Maybe people were more patient and mellow:

"Hi, Mikmik! It's Bercode. I'm calling from a pay phone with my friend Imelda! We'll just wait here patiently in the rotating cafe on the corner of Roxas Boulevard for two hours until you get here. No big deal!"

Or maybe the active adults of long ago were

(STORY WILL CONTINUE)

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

Where to Stop Where to Go

Kadayawan price-off at Grand Regal Hotel Davao

IN RAWIS, AUGUST 15 GRABS AS the festival of festivals takes you to a vibrant celebration the Dinagyaw people, the Kadayawan sa Dabaw Festival, in celebration of Davao's plentiful harvests, it showcases the cultural diversity and indigenous heritage through street dancing in colorful costumes, including the parade of boats, and other festivities Davao has to offer.

Grand Regal Hotel Davao is the perfect option for visitors and travelers who will arrive for this occasion. It's happily town situated at Rts. 7, JP Laurel Avenue, Lanang, is a 10-minute chare to Davao International Airport. Grand Regal Hotel also prepares to welcome guests with specially planned event experience events.

The festival price-off room offer stands from Aug. 1-31. For only P5,399, two persons may enjoy the comfort of the greatest rooms. This is, by far, the considerable rate the hotel extends to all travelers and locals, not of-tours, and inclusive of buffet breakfast for two at the Seaside Restaurant. A convenient airport shuttle for your transfer going to and from the hotel is free. Another free amenity is the use of the Body Garage and Fitness Center and Saunas from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. a refreshing dip in the pool (9 a.m. - 8 p.m.) may well cool you off. And to complete the list of a real festive town, you will enjoy free breakfast buffet with dishes to create topping, as you arrive.

Where else you may want your special guests when it requires a really superb guarantee delights, than to take them to the daily lunch buffet at the Champagne Bar. An unmatched scenic, the kind that's impossible to stop drowning into your hearts, with a price so reasonable at P450/net makes you wish this array of food is available throughout the year.

For reservations, you may call direct at (082)225-9000 and 300-8888 local 8107 for room reservations or the sales office at local 8333 and 8367.

One great place at One Tagaytay Place

TIRED OF THE SAME, OLD HOMING residences in the metropolis? Diversify and explore your other options. Check out One Tagaytay Place Grand Suites located in serene, carefree Barangay in Tagaytay City. Easily accessible and only an hour's drive away from Metro Manila, One Tagaytay Place Hotel Suites stands tall with 120 elegantly furnished and embellished suites executed in post-modern fusion aesthetics.

One Tagaytay Place takes pride in its well-appointed dishes, 1 bedroom and penthouse suites, each fully air-conditioned rooms and suites are secured by state-of-the-art electronic lock system and are furnished with a safety box, complete mini bar, DVD player, LCD flat TV, coffee and tea making facilities, and are provided with cable service – presenting a very relaxing and hassle free stay for all guests.

Azalea, the hotel's coffee shop with a chic and comfortable ambience, offer daily ala carte specialties including, its very own version of kalale, Tagaytay's famous beefy broth dish.

One Tagaytay Place Hotel Suites offers a refreshing alternative to leisure and business travelers as an oasis of relaxation, rejuvenation and sheer pleasure.

One Tagaytay Place Hotel Suites is managed by Dusit Hotels and Resorts Corporation. For inquiries and reservations please call 384-4133, 384-4150 or its sales office at 478-5518 or 478-5519. Visit their website at www.onetagaytayplace.com and www.greatsuitehotels.com.

Digital photography workshop and more at Microtel Batangas

MICROTEL BATANGAS IS OFFERING A course in learn basic and advanced information on digital photography. "In Your Eyes", a basic digital photography workshop will be held on Sept. 26-27 and an advanced workshop will follow on Oct. 24-25. Registrants live in P1,500 per person based on triple or double occupancy of hotels on digital photography by Mikolova, seven sessions, dation, one serving of breakfast, lunch and dinner, certificate of attendance and an entry to the Microtel Photo contest. Exciting prizes await all registered participants so enjoy this new adventure and book now. Limited slots are available.

Microtel Batangas also offers weekend treats such as Family Weekend Getaway for as low as P800 per person (inclusive of overnight stay, breakfast and barbecue by the pool good for four persons). If you want more adventure, feel the magic of Enchanted Kingdom for only P1,220 per person inclusive of overnight stay, breakfast and Enchanted Kingdom day passes good for four persons.

For your meetings and seminars, packages are also available for as low as P1,750 per person with overnight room accommodation, full board meals, use of function room, use day unlimited use of WiFi service and free flowing coffee and tea. For more details, please call (049) 571-7171, (0940) 608-3555, (0917) 8624-9000 or e-mail microtelbatangas@yahoo.com.ph.

Happy hour is twice as much fun at Cinnabar

CINNABAR, RENAISSANCE MANILA CITY HOTEL, MANILA'S 24-HOUR lounge synonymous with modern luxury, lets you maximize your enjoyment of the happiest time of the day as it offers a Buy One, Take One promotion on all beverages starting Aug. 15 to Sept. 30. Enjoy Cinnabar's extensive selection of cocktails, wines, single malts, and champagne from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. daily. For the more adventurous drinker, visit the bar and ask for the cocktail culture experience, where one throws caution to the wind and lets the roll of the cocktail culture dice decide one's fate. Drinks can be personalized by servers or can be offered on the drink of the day. Another option is Happy hour is best complemented with Cinnabar's signature bistro "bites" such as mini Kobe beef burgers, foie gras club sandwich or Belgian chocolate fondue, among other delectable preparations. All food items can be further appreciated as a 20 percent discount is extended also from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. daily. For more information, call The Renaissance Makati City Hotel at (811-6888.

Gambrinus Bar in August

BEAT THE RAINY DAYS AT INTERCONTINENTAL MANILA'S GAMBRINUS Bar where freshly baked and tossed offerings await you. Pastry chef Sonny Jacinto unveils his new selection of breads and savories this month of August. For only P270 enjoy a cup of Lavazza espresso coffee, your choice of bread and complimentary one-hour wifi access. For homecoming Filipinos (balikbayans) and foreign visitors a must-try experience at the Gambrinus Bar is the Filipino High Tea which is available daily from 3 p.m. onwards. For just P300 per person, enjoy a generous serving of bibingka, puto, kutsinta, and other delectable native delights of which there is not one chocolate. Wine lovers should take advantage of the Wine Flights promotion. For the price of one, they will be served 2 tasting portions of carefully selected wines. The promotion is available daily from 5 p.m. onwards. In celebration of its 40th year anniversary, Inter-Continental Manila is holding a grand raffle of trips to dream destinations. Every P4,000 in a single receipt or any of its restaurants will entitle the diner to one raffle ticket. Prizes up for grabs include a Princess Cruises trip for 2 to Alaska or the Caribbean or the Mediterranean, a Singapore Airlines trip for 2 on Royal Dutch Airlines European destinations from Manila. The raffle ends April 15, 2010. For reservations and more information please call 703-7300.

Rainy Days promo at Courtyard Inn - Subic Bay

AT COURTYARD INN - SUBIC BAY, RAINY DAYS ARE THE BEST TIME TO enjoy great moments with family and friends. Snuggle up beside your loved one on a cool rainy night while enjoying a delicious meal or watching a great movie made memorable by the rain. Every morning rooms rates starts at only P5,042.00, at Courtyard Inn's tastefully furnished superior room. Or you may choose to have more space and avail of the deluxe room at P7,885 or executive suite for only P9,082.00. The "Rainy Day Getaway" promo includes two complimentary breakfasts at Amici Restaurant and discounts at Balinese Jukpod, Ilong Restaurants and Bar, and Sam's Grill-Subic). This promo is available from July 1 -Sept. 30. For inquiries, call (047) 252-2888 or fax (632) 885-0134 or e-mail courtyard@subicbay.com or visit www.courtyardinn-subic.com.

Featured Hotels and Resorts

Microtel

Inn & Suites

How was life like...

From page F1

actually more practical and efficient, boasting and hustling in their spare and pressured time and shoulder pads.

Instead of thinking their iPhones of the time like delivering memories, people memorized numbers and addresses, and if they were lost, they simply walked into those old stores, had leisurely sups of joe for a press, and asked the sassy counter clerk for directions.

They lounged on cubicles, used dumbwaiters, whistled for cabs, said their vows in bus

tenders, got their shoes shined, screamed their neighbors' names on the street before their weddings.

We think we are so innovative now, but maybe back in BC, people actually interacted more with the physical world and with one another.

Digital innovations at cinema complex

DRIVING OUT FROM THE dynamic digital movements, Ayala Malls Cinemas has introduced an innovative technology to take movie-watching to new heights. The 7th-certified Cinemark 3 Cinema 1 is now equipped with Dolby 3D Digital Cinema technology, guaranteed to give discerning moviegoers a one-of-a-kind viewing pleasure.

The groundbreaking approach gives a refreshing new dimension to the silver screen. What were once viewed as "flat" images now seem to...

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Shopaholics relax at Terre Venezia

AFTER A HARD DAY'S WORTH OF SHOPPING SPREE, WHEN THERE'S no place around to shop, shopaholics also need a place to relax and unwind. Good thing Terre Venezia offers "Rooms for Shopaholics". From June 1 to Aug. 31, book a superior room for only P3,888 net, a deluxe double unit for P4,988 net or a deluxe loft for P6,888 net and shop to your heart's content. This package is good for one night accommodation with breakfast for 2 persons and free use of the gym and pool. It also includes round-trip shuttle service to Trinoma Mall, along with a welcome shopping bag. Managed by renowned hotel management team Quantum Hotels and Resorts, Terre Venezia is located at 170 Timog Avenue corner Scout Santiago Street in Quezon City. It carries fully furnished rooms, specifically the superior or studio units, double-deluxe or one bedroom suits and lofts, which are two bedroom suites. The suites extend to balconies while all rooms are ready with refrigerator and microwave oven. Each unit is equipped with cable network television, individually controlled air-conditioning unit and cold water in the elegantly tiled bathrooms. For reservations, please call Terre Venezia at (02) 002-4008 to 09 or e-mail terrevenezia@quantumsuites.com.

Hotel La Corona De Lipa promo

ENJOY THE COMFORT OF HOME WHILE DOING YOUR USUAL EVERYday business for only P999/night that includes standard room for single or twin occupancy. Guests can satisfy in the complimentary breakfast, internet access, sports facilities and personalized service. Hotel La Corona De Lipa is just 90 minutes drive from Makati City. Strategically situated across Old Lipa, it is a few minutes away from universities like De La Salle and Lipa City Colleges. For further inquiries and reservations, please call Hotel La Corona De Lipa at (02) 000-2010/ 0400-1866-4333 or e-mail reservations@hotellacoronalipa.com. For online reservations you may visit their website www.hotellacoronalipa.com.

Subic Lighthouse Rainy Day promo

BEAT THE RAINY DAY BLUES AND CONTINUE TO VACATION IN STYLE AT Lighthouse Marina Resort with its bevy of discounts under its Rainy Day promo. For a start, Subic Bay's premiere hotel is providing 15 percent discount on all types of rooms from Sunday to Thursday on top of their discounted leisure activities and dining rates. Other promos include the 15 percent discount on rooms are valid on Fridays and Saturdays. Guests staying in Aqua Terrace rooms are entitled to a free massage while guests in Aqua Veranda and Aqua Spa suites can enjoy a free massage and dinner for two at the Mediterranean-inspired Sands Restaurant. Head on the hotel's succulent cuisine with a 10 percent discount on food and beverage. If you are an adventure aficionado, take a mountain bike ride through Subic's bike trail and be mesmerized with the stunning panorama. The hotel extends up to 10 percent discount on the rental price. Promos are till Sept. 30. For details, call 880-3024 or 771-0018, e-mail reservations@lighthousesubic.com or log on to www.lighthousesubic.com.

Thunderbird Resorts offers rainy season promo

STAY (BY WHILE) HAVING AN IDEAL LEISURE AND RELAXATION AT Thunderbird Resorts that offers a perfect getaway to escape the blues this rainy season. Member-owner enjoys Thunderbird Resorts Rockpackage rate starts at P3,888 which includes an overnight stay with breakfast for two, use of swimming pool and refreshing welcome drinks. Promo is valid until Sept. 30, for inquiries and reservations call their Makati office at 886-5555 or log on to www.thunderbirdresorts.com/philippines. Thunderbird Resorts is located at Eastridge Ave. Silangan in Rizal and at Poro Point Freeport Zone, San Fernando City in La Union.

Latitude celebrates second anniversary

LATITUDE RESTAURANT AT "PASEO'S" HOTEL, MANILA IS CELEBRATING its second anniversary this August with a special buffet lunch offer for diners priced at only P588 net per person. The restaurant presents diners with a wide selection of international dishes such as Japanese, Chinese and western cuisine. As an added treat for diners, the buffet features a "weekly theme corner" for serving ethnic, French and South American recipes. A strolling band plays for diners on weekends, while specialty cocktails and tokens courtesy of Latitude are rolled on all Sundays of the month. Latitude cardholders may enjoy special rates for lunch and dinner buffets by simply presenting their cards upon dining. Latitude is open daily from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. For lunch or dinner bookings, call (632) 573-7011 local 2402 or send an e-mail to reservations.thewhitehangar.ph.com.

Rebirth of Naga Regent Hotel

RIGHT IN THE HEART OF BICOLANDIA'S BUSTLING PROVINCIAL CITY, Naga City, is a haven for tourists and businessmen wanting to indulge in dining comfort and all the conveniences equipped with the amenities that satisfy the requirements for business and pleasure. This is what Naga Regent Hotel and Convention Center proudly offers. Warm and welcoming. You just know the moment you step inside the hotel that you are in an abode of warmth and comfort - with the sunny smiles of the amiable hotel staff greeting you and making you feel right at home. The hotel's sophisticated ambiance you're on urban-style dynamic design that's edgy yet appealing, unpretentious on the outside and elaborate in its private spaces. It is no wonder then that Naga Regent Hotel and Convention Center has earned the trust and respect of the taste of travelers. And with its stylish, the hotel promises more excellent amenities and service for its clients. For bookings and other details contact sales at (hotel) (+054) 472-2525; then Manila number at (+632) 687-0000, or log on to www.nagaregenthotel.com.

Partner Hotels Directory

Windows® Life without Walls™
Acer recommends Windows.

intel CORE 2 Duo
Look for intel Inside®

Life is Easy...
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Take a good look at these exciting **Aspire desktop** models to hit the market — equipped with the most up-to-date and practical features that you'll surely love. Choose the one that fits you and your lifestyle...and enjoy life to the fullest!

Aspire M5711
SRP: 34,450 (2,870.83/mos. x 12mos.)

Genuine Windows Vista® Home Basic • Intel® Core™2 Duo processor E7300 (2.66GHz, 3MB L2 Cache, 1066MHz FSB) **• 2x 2GB DDR2 800MHz/320GB HDD SATA II 7200rpm** • No Floppy Drive • with **NVIDIA® 9500GS** (512MB VGA Card) • with Card Reader • **Acer 19" WideScreen LCD Monitor** • Gigabit LAN/802.11 b/g

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From page 11

opting to life with ro-dhole-hairy-and bel-faic-colors.

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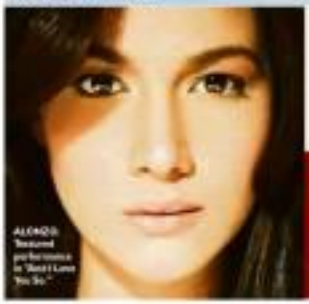

Editor Nestor U. Torre ● Assistant Editor Nina P. Aviles

SATURDAY Special

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Beauty isn't skin-deep for Bea Alonzo

By Nina P. Aviles

TRUE BEAUTY GOES BEYOND physical attributes, and no one embodies this better than Bea Alonzo, who effortlessly embraced the "ugly duckling" sensibility and gentle soul of her well-loved TV alter-ego, Beatriz Pengson (aka Betty La Fea). Our recent interview with Bea, the private individual, proved that there's more to her success than luck and those refreshing Filipino-British good looks.

In Laurent Dyogi's current three-hanky romantic drama, "And I Love You So," Bea stunned fans her own as a mature actress. In the movie, the 21-year-old actress plays Lani Cruz, a 28-year-old newly married preschool teacher whose happy-ever-after disintegrates after her doting husband, Oliver (Derek Ramsay), succumbs to brain aneurysm.

Distraught widow

The distraught widow launches on a desperate, darn-finds-another-in-the-love-and-nurturing friendship of another lost soul, Dixie Padilla (Sam Milby). The film alternately scares and sticks, but the lovely actress delivers a matured performance and manages to keep it real, from beginning to end, never allowing herself to wallow and get stuck in the schmaltzy melodrama of her character's misery.

When we asked Sam what set Bea apart from his other leading ladies, the 27-year-old heartthrob beamed, "Bea is always eager to learn. She absorbs everything the director says, and she's very dedicated in her craft. As you can see, she worked hard to shed a ton of weight to do justice to the role."

Sam also observed that Bea was wise beyond her years. He notes: "She may be young, but she's very mature. Hahaha-hihing dedication siya sa trabaho."

Controversial issues

The actress isn't known to manufacture or pursue controversial issues to keep herself in the limelight. For her, there's a fine line that separates her public identity and private persona. Yes, she guards her privacy well, but she still manages to keep herself accessible to her followers. She tells us, "Sometimes, the loudest can be the quietest. I don't feel I always have the time and be social to their audience. We're only human—and we also make mistakes. My advice to newcomers: Set a goal and don't let anyone put you down."

Bea's feminine beauty, soothing screen presence and spoken prerequisite have led to her successful collaborations with John Lloyd Cruz. For, there were duck in her seven-year filmography—her collaborations with Jericho Rosales ("Paupasin: The Movie") and Piolo Pascual ("Unexpectedly") were less than memorable— but she nevertheless acquitted herself well in them, because she was willing to take those risks.

Challenge

Well, here's a "risk" we'd love to see Bea tackle: head-on...movie musicals! She shares: "Doing 'Betty La Fea' was a challenge for me. I was intensely nervous because it was my first time to do comedy, but the whole experience was so much fun. Bes, I like singing, acting and dancing, so a song-and-dance project would certainly showcase everything I enjoy doing."

What fulfillment does she get out of being a performer? She replies: "Show biz has changed my life in many ways. I was able to help my family financially. And, I've always been fascinated with the power of television to inform, inspire and influence people. I love touching lives. It's very fulfilling and gratifying."

If there's one actor she wants to be given a chance to work with, who will it be? She answers: "I'd like to work with Aga (Muhlach), because I love all his movies."

Is there room for romance in Bea's life? What tips does she have for her suitors? She honors: "I'm not with anyone right now. I don't act nice or look for specific qualities—though bad breath or anything unpleasant really turns me off. But, I believe in destiny, and I know that somebody out there is meant for me!"

Loud, livid welcome for 'Darna's' return

By Nestor U. Torre

THE BIG DEAL ON TV THIS week is the start of the umpteenth "Darna" production on GMA-7, with Marian Rivera in the title role. We caught the show's first telecasts and found them rather loud and livid as they set the stage for Marian's first appearance as Narda/Darna. We trust that this initial over-the-top approach will soon settle down since the new series has made its big-deal impact on viewers.

Elements

Particularly loud in the initial telecasts were the characters played by Rez Lejano and Odette Khan, who screamed and cheered up the scenery in rather alarming ways. Do local viewers really like this shrill presentational style? We understand the superficial mom-see of flashy melodrama and black-and-white characters and situations, but can the fact that they oversimplify things and avoid the more fruits more significant elements like motivations, conflict, rising action and climax.

Of course, some viewers couldn't care less about such refinements. All they want is their nightly fix of easy-to-follow situations and diffusion endings that seems them to keep watching.

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GALLERIA

1 G.I. JOE
2 THE PROPOSAL
3 THE HANGOVER
4 BOOK OF BLOOD
5 AND I LOVE YOU SO
6 ORPHAN / G.I. JOE
7 LITTLE BOY BIG BOY
8 G.I. JOE
9 SHOWBOYZ
10 AND I LOVE YOU SO

ERMITA

1 BOOK OF BLOOD
2 THE HANGOVER
3 G. I. JOE
4 G. I. JOE
5 AND I LOVE YOU SO
6 AND I LOVE YOU SO
7 ORPHAN / THE PROPOSAL

METRO EAST

1 G. I. JOE
2 G. I. JOE
3 BOOK OF BLOOD
4 THE HANGOVER
5 THE PROPOSAL
6 ORPHAN
7 HARRY POTTER 6
8 AND I LOVE YOU SO

NOVALICHES | **PIONEER**

1 G.I. JOE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 THE HANGOVER
1 G.I. JOE
2 THE HANGOVER
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

STA. ROSA | **LIPA**

1 G.I. JOE
2 KAMASUTRA NIGHTS 2
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO
1 AND I LOVE YOU SO
2 G.I. JOE
3 THE PROPOSAL
4 FROM WITHIN

DASMARINAS | **IMUS**

1 THE HANGOVER
2 G.I. JOE
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO
1 G.I. JOE
2 THE HANGOVER
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

STARMILLS

1 THE PROPOSAL
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 BLOOD: THE LAST VAMPIRE
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO
5 G.I. JOE
6 ORPHAN

ANGELES | **TACLOBAN**

1 G.I. JOE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 ORPHAN
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO
1 AND I LOVE YOU SO
2 G.I. JOE
3 THE PROPOSAL

BACOLOD | **ILOILO**

1 G.I. JOE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 PUBLIC ENEMIES
5 BLOOD: THE LAST VAMPIRE
6 THE PROPOSAL
1 G.I. JOE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 PUBLIC ENEMIES
5 HAUNTED
6 THE PROPOSAL

Exemplary leader

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

ACCORDING TO VEDIC LITERATURE, the great Maharaj Prithu lived many years ago. As a leader, he was so exemplary that he inspired people and brought satisfaction to their hearts. Let's draw inspiration from his endless qualities.

As a king, Maharaj Prithu engaged everyone in the pursuit of spiritual principles. He was kind to his people, but chastised the unreligious and dishonest. When a person was disrespectful to him, he was forgiving.

The noble leader was a reluctant protector. He remained on the path of piety and was fair to both his own and his son's enemy. If his son deserved punishment, he didn't hesitate to punish him. His determination and practical nature pleased everyone. His followers embraced him as their beloved ruler.

Maharaj was willing to serve old men and give shelter to needy souls. He respected women as if they were his mother, and treated his wife as his other half. And, he was an enlightened soul who was most obedient to the Supreme Being.

Departure

For him, material possessions were meaningless and temporary. He loved everyone and wanted to return to the last moments of his life. Maharaj Prithu divided his riches among his people. He went into the forest to perform austerities in preparation for his departure from the mortal world. He had no other purpose but to satisfy the Supreme Lord. Then, the noble king left for the immortal realm in that perfect state of consciousness.

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

Loud, livid . . .

From page G1

such day's installments, cellphone or computer, as the case may be.

Others, however went more near and kept to the TV fantasy they would see on cue that our psychotics people keep their own sneering preferences in mind, as well. We do want our viewers' taste to improve in time, don't we?

In any case, the arrival of "Eternal" has made the competition jazz up its own act, to prevent the new series from completely dominating the ratings. That's why on "Wow Bahay Ito," the latest subplot is extremely wrong, fielding out just Thong Navarro, but no less than comedy king, Dolphy, as well. Sosy, if that isn't bringing out ABS-CBN's big artillery set close to home what is.

The channel's execs efforts are twisted, because "May Bukas Pa" has been in ratings trouble for many months. If "Eternal" ends up routing it in a couple tury, it will send out the "wrong" message that could affect the rest of ABS-CBN's evening programming, as well.

Childhood

As for the new "Eternal" series itself, its first few minutes have focused on the heroine's supposed childhood, her close friendship with an orphan boy, and her complex relationship with a snake-girl who later grows up into Sarnia's arch enemy, Sahara. Ida.

Most of the first episode have been just for the loud and livid television. But new performances stand out because they're "different." The first is Janice de Belen's portrayal of Leonarda, the mother of Valentina. De Belen's characterization is outstanding, because it's deeply felt, while not being over-the-top.

Being a good actress, she's able to "get inside character" while still making it character believable and empathetic. This is what many of the show's talents can't manage, because they concentrate on over-the-top theatrics that are too shrill and silly for words.

The other interesting performance that is turned in by Iwa Moto as Valentina. With some help from creative scripting, her character is more tragic and conflicted than past versions of the story had it.

Secret

This time around, Valentina's terrible secret initially paints her rather than turns her into a vengeful monster, and the attraction she suffers with enormously as her loneliness and grief, which are alleviated only by her only friend, Sarda.

Of course, the iconic twist to all this is that Sarda will eventually morph into superheroine Diana, with whom Valentina must fight to the death.

What about lead star, Marian Rivera, how does she fare as Sarda/Diana? As of last Thursday, nothing much was forthcoming from her as Sarda, whom she played with standard mimicry and good cheer. However, we expect things to liven up once Marian becomes Diana, because she has the curves and moxie for the role. Let's hope she doesn't disappoint.

'The Hangover' delivers the comic goods

By Nestor Torre

SOMETIMES, WHAT HAPPENS in Vegas really does stay in Vegas, as the trio of hangover protagonists in "The Hangover" finds out the morning after their wild bachelor party. Par for the course, the groom is gone—and no one else survived. There's also up to a crashed hotel suite, a chicken pecking at the roulette table, a baby in the safe, and a tiger in the bathroom!

Interesting night

Clearly, they had an interesting night in Sin City, too bad they won't remember anything about it.

It's a setup that's perfect for all kinds of gags, gaucheries, comic sequences and plot twists—and when it comes to finding ways to make you laugh, the movie doesn't disappoint. Directed by Todd Phillips (the film doesn't really break new comedic ground, but you'll have a lot of fun watching it, anyway.

There are no big-name stars in the production, which makes it easier to take the movie just the way it is—crude, lewd, but surprisingly witty and funny. This is not a movie that requires any deep thinking. So, if you and your friends are looking for two hours' worth of adolescent giggles and more than a few belly laughs, this will give you a excellent fix.

In "The Hangover," three groomsmen—Phil (Bradley Cooper), Stu (Ed Helms) and Alan (Zach Galifianakis)—sponsor a Las Vegas bachelor party for their soon to be married friend, Doug (Justin Bartha). The hoopsters kills time fatalistic as they get to Phil is the cool dude; Stu is the anxious geek; Alan is the weirdo for guy, and Doug is the "normal," well-balanced one.

The character outlines are basically, but the actors color within the lines vividly and Galifianakis' dopey and on-supply innocent idiot is a hoot. Also making an appearance in the movie is Heather Graham as a one-shot role as a stripper mom, as well as Mike Tyson as himself.

Phillips, who also co-scripted the, Deans for writing the script of "Borat," has a firm hand on the helm. He keeps the pace snappy all throughout, never letting the energy dip, while not cheating the many gags required at one time.

And, while there's a great deal of physical comedy, there are very funny verbal exchanges, so don't shut your brain down completely before you step into the cinema.

COOPER (center), with Galifianakis (left, holding a baby) and Helms.

Leisure, pleasure at the Marina

STREET SMART

Mandy Navarro

RECENTLY I ATTENDED THE birthday party of Nancy Pomentec at Moonbay Marina, the lovely resort she runs with hubby Nicole. The place is just over an hour's drive in Subic Bay Freeport Zone. This 10-hectare beach garden complex combines the welcoming ambiance of home and the charming grandeur of luxury.

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FERNANDEZ (RIGHT), with (from left) Bobby Navarro's, Marlene Yanican, Nestor Pedroso, Ding Cruz and Ollie Ruiz.

VILLASUEZ...Her

Bye-bye, 'birit'

By Nestor U. Torre

WHATEVER THE OUTcome may be of GMA-7's "Next Big Star" finals in the next couple of weeks, the talent search hosted by Regine Velasquez has already chalked up a major winning advantage in the enlightened way that its jurors have dealt with local show biz's rankling birit problem.

When the show started telecasting, many of its semi-finalists indulged in the usual screaming, shrill, high-decibel performance style that is equated with "champion-ship" singing in those neurotically benighted parts.

Interpretation

But, lo and behold, as the jurors cut down cases screaming contestant after contestant, the surviving runners soon realized that they had jumped on a bandwagon headed straight for perdition—and promptly and belatedly changed tack: instead of blasting in the birit mode, they forced themselves to instead focus on subtlety, texture, nuance, interpretation, emotion and restraint...all of the musical virtues that they'd overlooked or forgotten when the screaming, blasting mode reigned supreme.

Decisions

Thanks to the "Next Big Star's" jurors' consistent focus and perspicacity, the show's young contestants have shown that, when shallow and shrill "musical" practices are rendered disreputable and recessive penalties for indulgence people's decisions, they can rise to the challenge of higher and better musical standards.

Granted, the battle against birit isn't over yet, but the "Next Big Star" jurors have made significant inroads, as we thank them profusely. Let's hope that other singing (American) acts, as good (as opposed to loud) singing can finally reign supreme on the local performance scene.

If we succeed in this coordinated campaign, young singers won't suffer from irreparable damage just to please and impress the listening public. They would also be persuaded to realize that, to become a standout singer, you need much more than just a strong singing voice and high vocal register.

Even the listening public would benefit from this more enlightened view, because it would realize that it has missed out on true musical performers's most valuable virtues. By focusing on single auditory bombast, it has failed to appreciate the more emotive, aesthetic and lyrical powers of song and singing in its very bone.

Dennis

To further loosen the demise of the birit beast in these parts, our established singing stars should take their cue from the "Next Big Star" jurors and similarly downplay and downgrade the "screaming" style in their own performances.

Our top singers prove that they don't really like to birit, but they feel they have to do it, because their fans "expect" them to, and in fact feel disenchanted when they don't warwhoop and scream and hit those impossibly high notes.

Well, somebody's got to teach all of those misguided fans what exceptional musical performance should really be all about, so they can become more discriminating appreciators of good music. Our singing stars owe it to their fans to do their art and craft in finally lay this bird to rest.

Distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, Philippines

Hotdog hunger

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

SAUSAGES AND HOTDOGS ARE ABOUT as patriotic (or—that's why they're so good, I love the sausages of many European countries...Bratwursts, Polish, Hungarian, Weisers, the spicy French Merguez...as well as those good, old American ones. With some basic seasoning ingredients, melted Swiss cheese and Dijon mustard, they'll surely satisfy you.

Tasty

In New York, I used to feast on Sheftel's hotdogs. I love them for the zesty they deliver to me. With my basic Basic Hotdog, it's not very easy to find a good, "complete" hotdog that's tasty and heaven to your mouth.

Since, especially during late nights, I used to love the cheese dog of Burger Machine—a steamed pork bun containing a nice-tasting hotdog with melted cheese, mayo and catsup. What a winner! Unfortunately, their hotdogs are no longer prepared this way. Calling Burger Machine management: Please bring them back.

Idea

My idea of losing weight is to skip dinner. I load up on breakfast and lunch, play badminton in the afternoon, and do away with dinner when possible. It works if you're disciplined. Unfortunately, there's a Jollibee branch outside my village, which always tempts me into getting a hotdog.

Sadly, I frequently get disappointed. The texture is a bit like Herons sausage—it doesn't have much character, and something is missing.

In one of my failed attempts to skip dinner, I passed by Jollibee and decided to enjoy a hotdog sandwich. This time, there was something different about the sandwich: It had the right soup I was looking for! Thinking it was a mistake, I tried it again and realized that the tasty hotdog was now making it more difficult for me to skip dinner—a hotdog sandwich with mayo, grated cheese and catsup. Yummy! Check it out.

Happy eating!

Email: sandydaza@yahoo.co

Promising cinematographers get boost from Cinemalaya

By Rica Arevalo

THE RECENT CINEMALAYA FILM FEST revealed some surprising discoveries in the field of cinematography. Meet two promising cinematographers...Cinemalaya winner, Pao Orendain ("24E"), a 32, while Mackie Galvez ("Slingerysound") is 24.

It was natural for Galvez to train for Orendain, having been a photographer for many years. He shares: "I apprenticed for Nap Jamir and took workshops at Mowelfund and in Prague." For his part, Galvez was with the production team of Jeremiel Dawg's "Confessional." He recalled: "When Jeremiel needed a DP for got me."

Importance

Orendain stresses the importance of his job. He explains, "Cinematography is one of the tools of the director. We have to execute his vision. Without us, you won't see anything onscreen."

During flashbacks in "Slingerysound," Galvez teamed up with production designer Benjamin Padero to cast retro as inspiration for those scenes' "reflective" look. He adds: "I also toyed with flares and distortions," which magnified Che Ramos' inner suffering as an incest victim.

Orendain is happy with his Balanghai trophy, though he wasn't around to accept it as the awards ceremony. He enthuses, "Cinemalaya is a good place for first-timers. My advantage was that I was able to do in-

GMENGMA. Won a Balanghai trophy for his work in "24E."

dies first before mainstream projects. The former is more liberating than working on studio films, which usually dictate and prioritize 'bankable' clients." Galvez concurs, "We've done with gloss. Lighting a Cinemalaya film was a breath of fresh air."

Tips

Any tips for aspiring cinematographers? Orendain was quick to answer: "Be open, because there are a lot of new things to be learned from every shoot. Grow creatively and master your craft."

Galvez wishes to work in commercials: "Some people only want to keep doing feature films, but I'm not one of them. I want to do TV commercials, because that's where you make money" he jests.

Galvez and Orendain have one thing in common: "We value our job seriously," stresses Galvez. Orendain adds: "I'll continue doing cinematography even with students and non-paying filmmakers if the project is exciting."

GALVEZ. Working on the festival entry was a breath of fresh air.

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IN THIS ISSUE
Bye-bye, 'birit' /G4

SATURDAY Special

Liev Schreiber goes from Victor to…Vilma

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Rubeus U. Nepomuceno

NEW YORK—Going from Victor Creed/Sabretooth to Vilma is quite a switch, but that's what Liev Schreiber accomplishes in director Ang Lee's "Taking Woodstock."

Playing a drag queen/security guard named Vilma, Lee saves shoeless, bright blonde hair and women's clothes, but with the biceps he built from "Wolverine." The actress works as Lee, aided by the director of such masterpieces as "Brokeback Mountain" and "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," essays an ex-Marine who's comfortable being a transvestite.

The actor's drag turn is one of the many pleasures in the film adaptation of Elliot Tiber's book about how he inadvertently played a crucial role in the iconic festival. The entire cast is uniformly good—from newcomer Demetri Martin (who plays Elliot), Imelda Staunton, Emile Hirsch, Eugene Levy, Jonathan Groff and Mamie Gummer (Meryl Streep's daughter).

Drag queen

When we asked Liev how his wife, Naomi Watts, reacted when she first saw him in drag, he answered, "She was mortified!" But, moreover, Liev as Vilma is not bad looking at all. Despite the stitched-on sparkling out of his dresses, the actor is completely believable as a comforting drag queen who encourages Elliot to come to terms with who he is. He got compliments from reporters interviewing him at the press con in New York's Waldorf Astoria.

But, Liev maintained, "Let's face it, I didn't look that great. It's nice to know I have nice legs. It's very kind of you to say I looked good in a dress, but you're lying through your teeth (laughter). I didn't fit into a dress. My first reaction was, 'Wow, this is humiliating!' Even after, very quickly, vanity set in—because that was the impulse that made me want to look more like a woman, which made me want to be more attractive."

According to Liev, the costumes helped a lot in finding out Vilma. "There's something [about] putting on women's clothing," he explained. "You start to move immediately like a woman. That was the most important part of the process. We dug and we, the first two weeks[for, fittings were important. Just putting on the dress made me feel like Vilma behind the dresses."

Decision

Liev, who insistingly is a big Manny Pacquiao fan, volunteered, "Another thing that helped me was that, when I was a kid, my mother had a friend, a guy named Bloodwell, who had a beard but dressed in women's clothing. He played the piano in the back of a bar that he drove around the Lower East Side of New York—he was a wonderful character! He was probably in his 60s. Bloodwell had probably been a drag queen early on in his life and had made a decision to live as a woman.

"But, over time, because of his desire for comfort and the fact that he was male and he wasn't transgender—he hadn't had an operation—certain elements of being male were

(CONTINUED ON PAGE H2)

SCHREIBER (right), with "Taking Woodstock" director, Ang Lee.

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Vilma's experience, example inspire young actors

SANTOS. Her star has risen beyond the limits of show business.

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST MONTH, WE CAUGHT the first of five weekly specials on Vilma Santos that ABS-CBN has whipped up to honor the iconic film luminary, whose star has recently risen beyond the limits of show business, into the more rarefied heights of public service and political clout.

Scenes

The first special featured no Vilma's acting career and lovingly raved theatric talent. The episode's idea was to inspire and teach younger actors by using Vilma's experience as an example. Specifically, scenes from some of Vilma's most acclaimed movies were presented by young actors, and Vilma and director Laurice Guillen commented on their performances.

The concept was fine, but the problem was, some of the young thespians failed to measure up to the demanding scenes' challenges. For instance, Kim Chiu was assigned Vilma's role in "The Relucio Cortes Story," which was emotionally inspired by her late, Gh, she did her screaming, flailing scenes loudly and truthfully enough, but she didn't fill it in with enough character insights to make it truly empathetic and moving.

It was clearly a case of too demanding, too soon for the still "developing" actress, whose thespic limitations we've previously seen on her current TV series, "Stairway Indanan." It would have been better if Kim had been given a less emotionally taxing scene to do.

Another young actress who came up short was Nikki Gil, who was seen reacting to "acting to the audience" and "indicating" mannerisms in her segment. The male actors also failed to rise to really felt and focused portrayals.

Special challenge

As for Megan Young, she was given the special challenge of acting with Vilma herself, to her. Their scene was an "inquest" [interpreter] exercise, in which they played themselves. Megan didn't know what was going to happen, Vilma started ribbing her and her attitude, and everything was supposed to culminate in Megan getting so pressured and ticked off that she would end up slapping the hell out of Santos.

Well, it didn't happen. When Vilma started bantering her, Megan did get flustered and feel threatened, but no slap was forthcoming, not even a pat on the cheek.

What happened? Was Megan a bad actress? Not really. The way we saw it, the nonacting part of the exercise was the fact that it was an inquest, and Vilma and Megan were supposed to play themselves. Actors have an innate need in playing parts and mouthing written dialogue, so the impove situation may have been too raw and different for instantly manage and "ride on."

In addition, acting with the great Vilma Santos would scare the most young talents—and slapping the thespic icon and governor of Batangas province would be, well, unthinkable—and thus potentially impossible!

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So, despite everyone's best efforts, Vilma's special on acting was less than the success it is touted to be. We can, however, that aspiring actors did pick up some pointers from Vilma on how to do well in their own careers.

Respect

First, she strongly urged, take acting seriously—in a profession, not just as something that's fun to do. Treat your career with respect and it will also treat you well. Work really hard to hone your talents.

Don't forget your ethical principles and don't make cuts that you do not respect yourself and others. Understand the characters you play and give your portrayals everything you've got. Value your audience and don't take their support for granted—and, with pluck and luck, you could, like Vilma, enjoy a decades-long acting career.

Compromising the National Artist Awards

By Bobo Cervantes

THE SECRET BEHIND GIVEN TO OUR deserving artists is the National Artist award, conferred every two decades ago by then-First Lady Imelda Marcos.

The award was prestigious and highly respected because the artists cited were undoubtedly deserving of the accolade. It's the ultimate honor this nation can bestow upon an artist, be him/her body of work.

Hardly was there a hint of politics as cited as Mrs. Marcos was properly advised. To prevent politics from having an undue hand in this particular award, a selection process and research committees were set up. In the beginning, it was Mrs. Marcos and her advisers who selected artists who were obvious cultural icons.

Selection process

With time, it became vital that an unbiased selection process be set up. The responsibility was given to the Cultural Center of Philippines' Board of Trustees. However, in due time, the National Commission of Culture and the Arts was included.

As a member of the CCP board, I saw its keenest problems. To begin with, the NCCA has more voting members than the CCP Board of Trustees. Furthermore, the National Artist Award Law allows the President to add names to her/their choice (read by the Artistic Committee, or we personified those close to the Palace to advise the President was to include names that did not pass the selection process, since part "duping National Artists" were removed negatively by the artistic community.

Prerogative

Not too long ago, I pleaded with a Palace official to convince the President not to include a name unworthy of the National Artist Award. I recommended that the President could bestow a Presidential Award upon that person, instead, more than any her prerogative.

I would have supported Cecile Guidote-Alvarez to do as much as the cultural adviser of President Arroyo. So, imagine the shock when she declared the National Artist for Theater when she had not even been nominated, and did not go through the selection process she was a significant part of (as the head of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts).

Topping it all was the inclusion of Carlo J. Caparas, a film director best known for gory monster films. Is he in the same class as Gerardo de Leon, Lamberto Avellana, Lino Brocka, Ishmael Bernal or Eddie Romero?

Worst drunk, Fr. Ramon Bautista, whom we choose as National Artist for Music, was taken off the list. He had been highly recommended by his peers for his talent, body of work and creative integrity.

The dueling-dozen insults all Filipino artists. It's an audacious act that turns the National Artist Award into a political achievement rather than an artistic accomplishment.

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unavoidable, like facial hair. Well, high heels weren't that unobtainable for you found this compromise between his organic male sexuality and his internal female persona. That was something that interested Ang and me. Vilma isn't someone who dresses as night and performs in a show. He lives this song. How does that change the nature of his character? There was less make-up. A little bit of hair gone every time."

Gov also credited someone for his voice for the film, saying the resounding voice that came very well with direction drama. "I had a movement teacher at Yale named Mickey Fine, who's from Queens. He always used to talk like this (deep voice). But, he was an ramp as the day is long. He was one of Martha Graham's original dancers. He moved with incredible grace and was very effeminate. But, he had this really contradictory voice—it was very deep, and he had a Queens accent. So, I was always like imagining Christopher Walken as a woman (laughter). To me, Vilma was about sounds—sounds and that was value. I was kinesthetic."

Comic idea

The father of two boys (he chose), "I have done drag before. Right out of school, I played a suicidal drag queen in Stan Spinner's 'Mixed Nuts.' I have to admit that in both cases, I think there was a comic idea behind casting me as a woman. In Ang's case, it had deeper resonance. I'm reminded of the transsexual character John Lithgow played in 'The World According to Garp,' someone who has the odds marked against him. In other words, a 6'7", 220-pound man who wants to live as a woman. He's got a pretty tough. If that person can find some peace of mind and comfort with his existence, then we should be able to."

SCHREIBER. Consummate actor.

Surprising choices

Asked about Ang's surprising project choices, Liev said, "When I read the script of this movie, I thought, 'Wow, it's what to beg Liev doing with a sort of Bonnie Bob comedy about Woodstock?' But, I realized that Ang does that all the time. Every time he makes a film, I go, 'What is he doing?' What does he know about gay cowboys?' You can't put a label on him. It's part of the reason why I was interested to work with him. A big part of why I did this film was to have a chance to work for him. If I have to find a couple of threads in all of his films, it's a couple of things: There's real specificity and a carefully observed eye. He's a stickler for research. Once he's come with all that, he gives very consciously and aggressively for this human element. He's always after the humanistic element."

Since he looks very as same as Vilma (a compliment to him as an actor), Liev was asked how comfortable he was in his own skin. The consummate actor replied, "I'm always more comfortable in other people's skin. That's a very Hannibal Lecter thing to say (laughter). It's the difference between observing and participating. I've always been an observer. I've been more self-conscious about participating than I have been about observing."

E-mail reinpeder_KMB@yahoo.com, and read his blog, "The Impulse Report," on http://blogs.inquirer.net/impulsereport.

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MONTAGE

For Mo welcomes Charlene

Charlene Gonzalez's aura of casual elegance and sophistication makes her the perfect choice to be the new face of fashion brand, For Mo. Bobbi warren Antolin, fashion ensembles with runway flattering pieces that highlight the best parts of a woman's body while downplaying her flaws.

Digitally Yours

Ayala Mall Cinemas are launching their new Hifi-certified Gracebolt 5 Cinema 1, now equipped with Dolby 3D Digital Cinema technology, guarantees you'll be glued discerning moviegoers the ultimate in viewing pleasure.

Esperanza Spalding

Today, bassist and vocalist Esperanza Spalding performs at the Jazzart Pavilion of Ateneo Philippine Pinas, with local jazz fusion ensemble, Fuhu, opening the show. Spalding will also be hosting a free master class clinic at 3 p.m., free for ticket holders at 10 am Pesados. Call 913-6001 or 891-0999.

'Kenny's Open 2009 Urbanite Run'

An exciting race of a kind was will be held today at Bonifacio Global City in The Fort. Billed as "Kenny's Open 2009 Urbanite Run," action starts at 7 p.m. Runners will rage all the evening with entertainment by Tribu Manila and deliriously healthy eating is being held for the benefit of Hands On Manila and the 17-75 Movements, and promoted by Kenny Rogers Roasters, with Coke Zero as representative.

Sam in 'N.O.A.H' cast

Sam Concepcion joins the cast of Dingdong's family musical, "N.O.A.H.," in the Nutribun, with Shaleah performing Sept. 4 at the Mendiola Theatre. Sam shares his role with Fred Lo.

SPALDING: Performs at Jazzart Philippines Pinas today.

Yoshi

Italian-Iloilo albums, 'Baby Steps,' includes 10 original tracks, with their haunting single, "Samurai." Available at all Bigcat outlets and Indigo Records or contact pandopchuan@gmail.com. The Italian-trained collective is made up of Sassie Kate Hernasie, pianist Nikki Sheen, drummer Michael Ali-ba and lead vocalist, Yoshi.

Bladyak

Every Friday this month, Bladyak performs at Cowboy Grill-Las Piñas, together with the M.U.B. and Arrimijos bands. Call 801-7644.

Perry Escaño

Gumtapala Theater presents the komedya "Thomson at Large" today at the SPF Theater and on Aug. 28 and 29 at SM Southmall. Las Piñas City. Perry Escaño plays Adolfo, the Albanian monarch whose main objective in life is to destroy his mortal enemy Homero.

'Sexiest Men of the World'

At 8:30 p.m. on Aug. 15, the E! channel telecasts "Sexiest Men of the World," featuring drop-dead guys like David Beckham, Johnny Depp and our very own Dingdong Dantes.

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Dance showdown

Let's Dance Barangay Showdown holds its elimination rounds today and on Aug. 22 at Ilo. Lucio Sauz. Call 661-9401 loc. 11.

'Alab'

The Italian pays tribute to Nitoy and Gito in the special concert, 'Alab,' on Aug. 23 at 8 p.m.

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